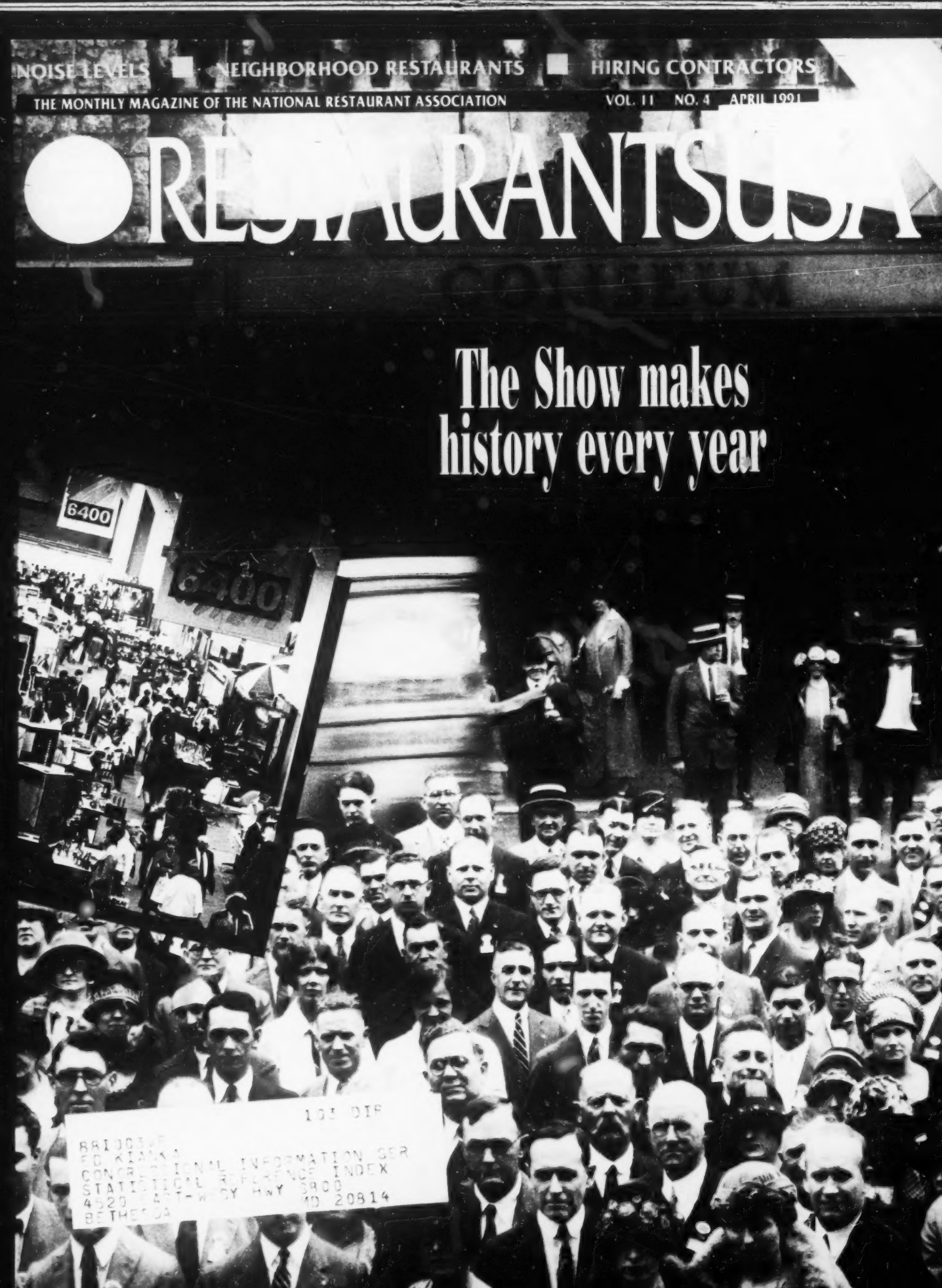
NOISE LEVELS ■ NEIGHBORHOOD RESTAURANTS ■ HIRING CONTRACTORS

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION VOL. 11 NO. 4 APRIL 1991

RESTAURANTS USA

The Show makes history every year



SEMINARS

Seminars scheduled during the National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show

Two-day seminar (5/18–5/19)
SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation
(Two-day, 16-hour certification course; deadline for registration is May 1.)

Saturday, 5/18

Full-day seminars
Banquet Management
Dining Room Management
Food Cost Management
Profitability
NEW! SERVSAFE/Responsible Alcohol Service

Half-day seminars
Kitchen Management
NEW! Legal Issues for Foodservice Operators
Promoting Your Restaurant
NEW! Service that Sells
The Labor Issue
NEW! Train-the-Trainer

Sunday, 5/19

Full-day seminars
Food Cost Management
Kitchen Management
Profitability
SERVSAFE/AFS Train-the-Trainer
Successful Buffet Management

Half-day seminars
Dining Room Management
Promoting Your Restaurant
Service that Sells
NEW! Stress Management
Theft Control

For further information on Show seminars, contact the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association, 250 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60606, or call (800) 765-2122; in Illinois, call (312) 715-1010.

EXECUTIVE STUDY GROUP SERIES

Tax Executives
4/2–5 Coronado, CA

Financial Officers
4/3–5 Coronado, CA

Environmental Affairs Officers
4/3–5 Boston, MA

Management Information Systems
4/16–19 Santa Fe, NM

Quality Assurance
4/24–26 Monterey, CA

Marketing Executives
5/15–18 Chicago, IL

MAECO
5/15–17 Chicago, IL

Foodservice Purchasing Managers
5/16–17 Chicago, IL

International Development Executives
6/12–14 San Francisco, CA

For more information on specific study groups, contact Philip Kralovec at (312) 853-2525.

The Executive Study Groups present semi-annual professional development programs for executives who would like to meet with their industry peers to share ideas and concerns. Executives in each of the aforementioned disciplines from member foodservice companies are welcome and encouraged to participate.

Note: *A new study group focusing on international development is currently forming. Any persons interested in participating in this group are encouraged to contact Philip Kralovec.*

COURSES AND BOOKS AVAILABLE

Certification Courses
Applied Foodservice Sanitation (AFS)
Applied Foodservice Purchasing
Controlling Costs in Foodservice
Effective Foodservice Marketing
Foodservice: A Managerial Approach
NEW! Foodservice Management Accounting
Foodservice Supervision: Achieving Success through People
Introduction to the Foodservice Industry/ Introduction to Foodservice Management
Legal Aspects of Foodservice Management
Management by Menu
NEW! Managing Foodservice Facilities and Equipment
Managing Quantity Food Operations
NEW! Nutrition for the Foodservice Manager
NEW! Principles of Professional Cooking

Self-Development Courses
Protecting Restaurant Profits: Managing Security
Effective Communication
Managing People
Restaurant Operations and Control
Restaurant Purchasing
Bar and Beverage Management
Helping People Grow
Service: Managing the Guest Experience

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RESTAURANTS USA

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Michael E. Hurst, owner
15th Street Fisheries, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Gearing up for the Show

Excitement is mounting for the upcoming 72nd National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show to be held in Chicago's McCormick Place from May 18 through May 22. This "Show of Shows" will feature almost 1,900 exhibitors on four huge floors, giving the approximately 100,000 attendees a look at all the latest in foodservice products, services and equipment.

Some of the highlights of the Show include the opening-day program with guest speaker Larry King, the American Culinary Classic, the 21st annual Culinary Arts Salon, the Salute to Excellence Forums and dinner, the Theatre Series, the Management Clinic, educational seminars and much more. Get all the Show details beginning on page 26.

The Show provides foodservice professionals with the chance to meet and share common concerns as well as learn about the freshest ideas in products and equipment. You can't afford to miss out on this opportunity to forge new friendships and make valuable contacts. Send in your Show registration form today to ensure your place at this important event.

Association calls for reform of teen-labor regulations

In reaction to a call for further teen-labor regulations and more severe criminal penalties for violations, foodservice industry representatives testified on March 19 at a Senate subcommittee hearing and asked that Congress not overregulate teen labor and thereby eliminate teenage jobs.

We think that the laws governing teen labor are antiquated and need to be updated to apply to contemporary work situations. To this end, we have submitted a proposal to the Secretary of Labor with eight changes we would like to see made in federal regulations.

Minimum-wage hike effective April 1

Operators should note that the federal minimum wage went up on April 1 from $3.80 to $4.25, and the tip credit increased from 45 percent to 50 percent. The association is still lobbying to have the wording of the law changed so that businesses grossing less than $500,000 a year will be exempted from federal wage requirements.

Parental-leave legislation under consideration

On March 20, the House Education and Labor Committee approved a bill that would require employers with 50 or more workers to provide 12 weeks of unpaid leave per year to employees to care for ill children, spouses, parents or for personal illness. The Senate is working on a comparable bill.

We have been monitoring this legislation and anticipate that it will be passed by Congress and vetoed by the President, as it was last year. We need to make our opinions known on this issue. Although we sympathize with the problems facing working parents, we think that providing better day-care options, rather than unpaid leave, is the solution.

Operators air concerns at ADA symposium

More than 100 foodservice professionals had the opportunity to share concerns and ask questions at the association's ADA Symposium, held on March 7 in Washington DC. Regulators explained the proposed

Great Menu Contest winners selected

regulations for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and answered questions from attendees.

This year's Great Menu Contest garnered almost 600 entries from around the United States and abroad. The contest judges, drawn from the trade press, food media and restaurant design industries, met in our association's Washington DC office to select the winners. The first grand-prize winner was China Coast Restaurant, operated by General Mills Restaurants, Inc., of Orlando, Florida; second grand prize was won by Embassy Suites Indianapolis and third grand prize was awarded to Boogies Diner, headquartered in Joppa, Maryland.

Three prize winners were selected in each of nine categories and will be on display along with the grand-prize winners at the Show. Be sure to stop by and see the winners.

Visit the association's booth at the Show

While you're at the Show, check out the National Restaurant Association's booth #3004. Information about our services will be available, and the "We're glad you're here!" program will be featured at the booth.

Anyone who comes to the booth and joins the association during the Show will be eligible to win a comprehensive computer package including an IBM PS/2 hardware system donated by IBM Inc.'s Retail Foodservice Division, as well as food cost management software from FOOD•TRAK and additional software from CaterMate and Great Plains Software.

In addition, staff members of the educational foundation will be at the booth with information about two new programs: SERVSAFE/Responsible Alcohol Service and Foodservice Management Professional (FMP) certification.

Responsible Alcohol Service is a training program designed to train owners, managers, bartenders and servers how to develop and implement responsible alcohol policies and procedures in their operations. The FMP certification program recognizes and certifies foodservice executives, managers, corporate trainers and educators who have demonstrated a high level of professionalism through their experience and education.

Complete details on both programs will be available at the booth. If you can't make it to the Show, call the foundation at (800) 765-2122 for information.

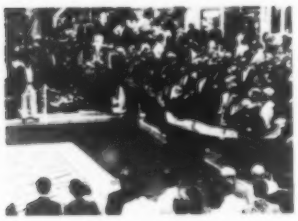
In March, 96 new members joined the association. We welcome all of you and hope we have the chance to get to know you at the Show in May.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Hurst

Michael E. Hurst
President and Chairman of the Board

COVER STORY: MAKE HISTORY AT THE 1991 SHOW

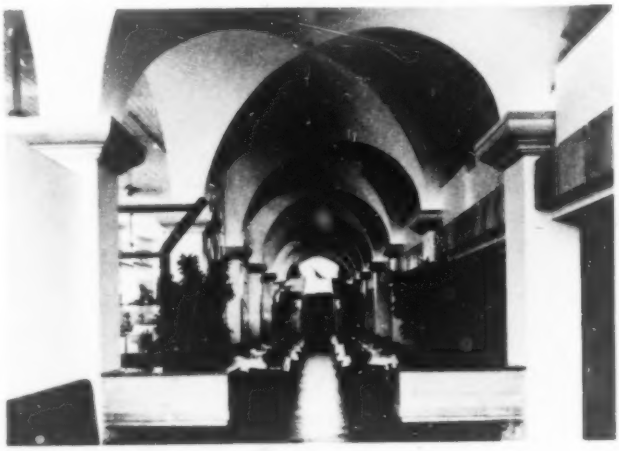


26 For 72 years, the annual National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show has been the place to feel the heartbeat of the industry. Now more than ever, in these competitive times, the Show's exhibits and educational programs can rejuvenate you and your business with the latest products, ideas and techniques. This Show preview and schedule will help you make your plans to attend.

SPECIALS

12 Restaurants in historic buildings
A foundation of history has brought these three establishments the flavor of success.

17 Noise levels in restaurants
One customer's music is another customer's noise. Before you adjust the volume, lend an ear to your patrons to discover the right amount of sound.



20 The restaurant around the corner
All across America, customers are returning to their neighborhood restaurants, where everyone's a regular and comfort is key.

24 Hiring a top-notch contractor
There's more to a good contractor than a sharp set of nails. When it's time to renovate or repair your restaurant, get to know your contractor before the sawdust starts to fly.

Cover photo: Sixth annual National Restaurant Association Show, 1924
Inset: 1990 Show

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- ☐ Zapping the zing from ads
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Chefs gather at symposium on global cuisine

World-class chefs Paul Bocuse of France and Hans Bueschkens of Canada were just two of the many standout chefs who participated in the American Culinary Federation's (ACF) Symposium on Global Cuisine, held recently in Tampa, Florida. Premier chefs from the United States, China, France, Canada and Germany met to discuss nutritional trends, food products and cultural differences in cuisine.

Chef Paul Bocuse, voted French chef of the century last year, spoke to symposium attendees about the changing role of the chef.

Bueschkens of Canada is well-known for his efforts as culinary ambassador for the World Association of Cooks Societies (WACS). "This symposium was important because we could discuss the changes coming to the industry, and we got views from around the world," says Bueschkens. "The biggest change in the future will be the adaptation of our cuisine to Far Eastern cooking, with its fresh ingredients, light seasonings and stir-fry preparation. People are becoming more nutrition-conscious, and this style of food preparation will become more appealing," he says.

Many of those attending the conference were apprentices who hoped to grab some gems of wisdom from the master chefs. The symposium was an important educational opportunity for these aspiring culinarians, says Bueschkens. "Young culinarians have much better opportunities than we had. People are eating out more because they have more leisure time and take more vacations. They have more chances to practice their craft," says Bueschkens.

Keith Keogh, the ACF's Southeastern regional vice president, was the moderator and coordinator of the event. Keogh also serves as team manager of the 1992 Culinary Team USA. Keogh says the event was "a unique opportunity to interface with some of the world's most influential chefs."

The benefits of saying "no"

Just by accurately answering "no" to three health questions, National Restaurant Association members and their employees under 55 (who work at least 30 hours per week) can enjoy the benefits of the Group Term Life Insurance Plan. Spouses of members and employees are also eligible, if they meet the same requirements.

Plan benefits include complete life insurance protection at a low cost, and rates are reduced even further for nonsmokers. Members may choose either the $50,000 or the $30,000 plan.

To find out about the three questions and for more complete information, call plan administrator Albert H. Wohlers & Co. at (800) 323-2106 or (708) 803-3100, or write to 1440 N. Northwest Highway, Park Ridge, IL 60068.

New poster breaks language barriers

Restaurateurs who encounter language problems at their establishments may be interested in a new poster designed exclusively for restaurants.

"Spanish/English for the Restaurant" is a 17-by-24-inch poster showing translations of more than 400 words and phrases for meals, foods, beverages, cooking methods, table settings, cleaning procedures, janitorial equipment, kitchen appliances, and verbal exchanges between managers and customers. The poster is designed to facilitate communication in either English or Spanish.

Printed on coated paper, the poster can be put in areas of interaction between customers and employees, and in places where employees talk to one another.

Each poster is available for $9.95 (California residents add sales tax), plus $2.00 for shipping and handling, from Translation Posters (specify Restaurant Poster), P.O. Box 1745(R), Lucerne Valley, CA 92356. For more information, call (619) 248-9018.

California restaurants are conserving water

In response to drought conditions, many California restaurateurs are actively taking steps to conserve water. Serving water to patrons only upon request is the most popular strategy. In such hard-stricken areas as the Central Coast, stronger measures are being taken, including the use of low-flush toilets, faucet flow restrictors, low-use dishmachines, recycling of "gray water," switching to disposables, and replacing plants with landscaping that requires no water.

If water allocation problems persist, operators may have to consider even more measures, including curtailing operating hours, charging for glasses of water and restricting restrooms to customers only. Drought veterans of the Bay area and Central Coast emphasize, however, that there is a limit to how far they can reduce water consumption without conflicting with sanitation requirements.

The California Restaurant Association is helping restaurateurs with water-saving strategies. A special report entitled *Conservation Guidelines: Saving Water and Energy in Restaurants* lists tips for saving water in every area of the operation. The report is free for the asking. Contact the California Restaurant Association at (800) 794-4272 or (213) 384-1200.

Soviet hospitality delegates visit Florida

A delegation of 17 top Soviet hotel and hospitality personnel sent by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev has been visiting South Florida for a condensed hospitality course at Nova University. As part of their trip, the delegation recently visited Grove Calloway's Adventure Bar & Grill in Coconut Grove, Florida, for hands-on experience on what makes an American restaurant tick.

Soviet hoteliers discuss restaurant development with Ground Up Associates management.

At Grove Calloway's, personnel from Ground Up Associates, the restaurant's management company, discussed inventory, scheduling and other hospitality topics with the Soviet delegation. "We're flattered to have had this unique opportunity," says Bob Green, president of Ground Up Associates. "They were so receptive to our methods that we are presently exploring the possibility of visiting the

(continued)

BOARDROOM

Hurst addresses food editors

Association president Michael E. Hurst traveled to Dallas last month to deliver a "state of the industry" address to a meeting of food editors, writers and broadcasters from across the country.

Attending the annual International Food Media Conference were approximately 120 journalists from national and regional media outlets, including the *Houston Chronicle*, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, the *Baltimore Sun*, the *Orange County Register*, the *Dallas Morning News*, *Prevention* magazine, New York's WCBS radio and ABC-TV's "Home" show.

Hurst's presentation featured seven segments, each focusing on a different aspect of foodservice, and each included association statistics that had never before been released. The focus of his talk, entitled "Is the Golden Age of Fine Dining Over?," centered on industry reaction and adaptation during the current recession.

"The golden age of dining out is not over," Hurst told his audience. "Fine-dining establishments, although declining in number, will continue to meet the demands of people celebrating special occasions, entertaining important guests or merely seeking fine food.

"In another sense, too, the golden age continues in the many restaurants that are changing to more casual concepts. By changing menu mix, service and ambience to provide less elaborate meals in less formal surroundings at lower prices, operators are broadening their appeal."

Other topics addressed by Hurst included nutrition among major fast food chains, service in restaurants, the association's menu analysis, nonsmoking sections, children in restaurants and alcoholic-beverage consumption.

On the first evening of the conference, the food journalists were treated to a spectacular "Taste of Dallas" reception and dinner, hosted by the National Restaurant Association. Southwestern and Tex-Mex dishes were served by top Dallas establishments including Actuelle, Baby Routh, Blue Mesa Grill, Brazos, Cafe Margaux, The Conservatory, Dakota's, The French Room, Jennivine, L'Entrecote, Mia's Tex-Mex, The Mansion on Turtle Creek, Monte Carlo, Quadrangle Grille, Routh Street Cafe and Sfuzzi. The recipe that follows is just one of the many standout dishes that were featured at the "Taste of Dallas" reception.

—Anne Papa Curtis

WAHALOTE PARSNIP ENCHILADAS WITH OVEN-DRIED CRANBERRY SERRANO SALSA

Yield: 12 enchiladas

Ingredients:

For the enchiladas

4 ozs. canola oil
1 yellow onion, finely diced
2 poblanos, roasted, peeled and diced
1 cup parsnips, roasted and diced
1 Tbs. garlic, roasted
2 ozs. ancho-quajillo paste
12 ozs. turkey breast, grilled and diced
6 ozs. Chihuahua cheese, grated
2 ozs. goat cheese
3 Tbs. cilantro, chopped
12 corn tortillas

For the salsa

1 cup cranberries, oven-dried
2 serrano peppers, minced
1 cup pears, peeled and pureed
1 Tbs. cilantro, chopped
2 ozs. chardonnay
1 Tbs. onion, diced
2 ozs. turkey stock
1 Tbs. lime juice

Method:

For the enchiladas

Heat 1 ounce of the oil in a saucepan. Saute onions and poblano peppers until onions are transparent. Transfer to mixing bowl. Mix parsnip, ancho-quajillo paste, garlic, cilantro and both cheeses. Season turkey breast with salt and pepper, and grill until medium. Dice and mix with all other ingredients. Separate mixture into 12 equal portions.

In a saucepan, heat remaining oil at approximately 350° F. Submerge corn tortillas one at a time for approximately 3 seconds. Take out of hot oil and let drain on paper towels to absorb excess oil. Coat tortillas with ancho-quajillo paste. Lay out on a sheet tray and roll equal parts of turkey mixture in each tortilla. Sprinkle grated Chihuahua cheese on top and set aside until ready to serve.

For the salsa

Peel pears and puree in a blender with the chardonnay. Pour into a saucepan, add remaining ingredients and bring to a boil. Remove from heat and allow to cool. Serve at room temperature with enchiladas.

—Courtesy of Baby Routh

Soviet Union on a consulting basis for various properties."

The stop at Grove Calloway's was one of a series of stops at area restaurant and hotel facilities that have conducted seminars on procedures such as front desk operations, marketing and housekeeping. The Hospitality School of Nova University, which is hosting the delegation, condensed a six-month program into just a few weeks to meet the Soviet delegation's time constraints.

Saving a choking victim gets cheaper

The price of a video outlining the Heimlich Maneuver for helping choking victims has been lowered for members of the foodservice industry.

As a result of the many calls received in response to the recent article "The Heimlich Maneuver: Part of a New Standard of Service?" (see February ***Restaurants USA***), AIMS Media has lowered the price of its video entitled *The Heimlich Maneuver: How to Save a Choking Victim* to $79.95 for members of the foodservice industry.

In addition, quantity discounts and rentals of the video are available. For more information, contact AIMS Media at (800) 367-2467 or (818) 785-4111. Ask for tape 9712.

Address your comments about ***Restaurants USA*** and current foodservice issues to: ***Restaurants USA*** Feedback, National Restaurant Association, 1200 17th Street, NW, Washington DC 20036. Submissions for publication may be edited for length.

Symposium informs restaurateurs about ADA

More than 120 foodservice industry members converged on Washington DC on March 7 for the National Restaurant Association's symposium on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to learn what the new law has in store for their businesses.

The law, signed by President Bush last July, will require most restaurants to make their services accessible as of January 26, 1992, to persons with disabilities and will prohibit job discrimination as of July 26, 1992, on the basis of a disability.

In late February, the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) proposed regulations that stipulate how ADA will affect restaurants and other public places.

Concerns aired

With the proposed rules barely one week old at the time of the symposium, operators, managers, architects and others in attendance had a forum for airing their concerns about the law's well-intended but vague requirements.

Attendees peppered John Wodatch of the Justice Department and Naomi Levin of EEOC, the chief authors of the proposed regulations, with questions about exactly how the new law will affect restaurant operations.

For example, John Curry, director of facilities for Bob Evans Farms in Columbus, Ohio, voiced the concerns of multi-unit operators about potential conflicts between ADA's federal accessibility requirements and the requirements of state and local building codes. Ted Papit, president of Unigate Restaurants in Dallas, asked for guidance on defining the essential and the nonessential functions of a job, to avoid unintended discrimination.

John Wodatch of the Department of Justice (standing) answers questions from (left to right) Tom Daly (Hilton Hotels), Ralph Brennan (Mr. B's) and John Curry (Bob Evans Farms) about ADA's accessibility requirements.

On these and many other points, regulators Wodatch and Levin were unable to give definite answers. Instead, the regulators explained that their agencies will enforce the law on a case-by-case basis, a policy the National Restaurant Association fears could lead to a sharp increase in lawsuits.

Marriott's James DeLuigi questions regulators about ADA's impact on foodservice.

Photos by Sonny Odom

Naomi Levin of EEOC attempts to explain ADA's employment rules. Levin: "There's simply no way to make this crystal clear."

"I know you don't like answers like 'It depends,' " said Levin, "but that's how it has to be, since we will determine each case on its own merits. There's simply no way to make this crystal clear."

Strategies for compliance offered

Participants also talked strategy with employment and engineering experts about how to best prepare for ADA's requirements.

"I strongly recommend that you start bringing your establishments into compliance with the law now," warned employment-law specialist Betty Southard Murphy. "The sooner you review your restaurant operations the better."

Murphy, who has served both as chief of the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division and as chairman of the National Labor Relations Board, advised operators to discuss ADA's hiring requirements with managers and to make detailed job descriptions specifying the essential functions of a job before beginning to recruit employees.

Mark Pitzer from the Internal Revenue Service told operators about tax incentives—up to a $5,000 tax credit and a $15,000 deduction per taxable year—available to help businesses pay for renovations to existing buildings made to accommodate workers or customers with disabilities.

Jean Mahoney of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, an independent federal agency charged with promoting employment of disabled workers, urged operators also to take advantage of organizations that can help recruit qualified persons with disabilities. Mahoney recommended contacting the appropriate state agencies via the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation at (202) 638-4634, and she recommended calling the President's Committee's own Job Accommodation Network at (800) JAN-7234 for advice.

—Andrew McLauchlin

DC ROUNDUP

□ *Small-business exemption correction pending.* With the federal minimum wage increasing from $3.80 to $4.25 on April 1, the National Restaurant Association and other business groups have turned up the heat on a yearlong lobbying campaign to restore an ironclad exemption for small businesses from the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

When Congress amended the FLSA in 1989, lawmakers expanded the small-business exemption to include most businesses that gross less than $500,000 a year. In the process, however, Congress inadvertently applied the FLSA to any employee who engages in interstate commerce—even if he or she works for a business that grosses less than $500,000.

As this issue of ***Restaurants USA*** went to press, 40 senators had cosponsored the Senate version of the exemption (S. 349), and 52 representatives had signed on in support of the House version of the bill (H.R. 1237). The association was pressing for a vote on the legislation before the end of March.

□ *Maximum teen-labor penalties increased.* The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) formally announced February 28 that as of March 1, it will consider assessing civil penalties of up to $10,000 per violation per employee for particularly serious violations of federal teen-employment regulations.

A 1990 amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act increased the maximum penalty from $1,000 to $10,000. According to the law, the $10,000 maximum applies to violations occurring on and after November 5, 1990. Fines assessed by DOL on violations that happened before November 5, 1990, will continue to reflect the previous $1,000 maximum.

DOL says it will take into account the size of the firm and the seriousness of violations in determining the amount of civil penalties to assess.

□ *Don't overpay alcohol-inventory tax.* In a March 4 letter to the National Restaurant Association, the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) urged restaurants that sell alcohol not to pay too much in federal alcohol-inventory taxes.

Under a provision of last year's budget bill, Congress required restaurants, bars and other alcohol sellers to pay taxes on the alcohol they had in stock on January 1, 1991. The tax must be paid by June 28.

BATF says many alcohol sellers have failed to claim available exemptions and tax credits. Businesses are exempt if their entire stock of distilled spirits, wine and beer totaled fewer than 500 gallons on January 1. All businesses with inventories of more than 500 gallons can offset their tax bill with credits. For more information, contact BATF's Tax Processing Center at (513) 684-6580.

New ideas about nutrition

The newly released third edition of the 1990 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* represents a bold step forward in the area of public health. The revised guidelines differ from earlier versions in that they give more direction and more food-specific examples than in the past.

Overall, the most significant change introduced in the 1990 guidelines is the switch to a more positive presentation. Rather than noting foods to avoid, the guidelines now include lists of foods to choose or use sparingly when following a healthy diet. Also, the recommendations are more total-diet oriented, emphasizing balance and moderation.

For foodservice operators, the specific nature of the new dietary guidelines makes it easier to put healthy choices on the menu. With a few simple changes or additions, items can be tailored to meet the criteria. Listed are the seven recommended guidelines, followed by ways in which foodservice operators can adapt them:

1. Eat a variety of foods.
2. Maintain healthy weight.
3. Choose a diet low in fat, saturated fat and cholesterol.
4. Choose a diet with plenty of vegetables, fruits and grain products.
5. Use sugars only in moderation.
6. Use salt and sodium in moderation.
7. If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

Foodservice operators should strive to provide a wide variety of foods on their menus. Of particular importance to restaurant patrons following the dietary guidelines are the vegetable, fruit and bread groups that will make up the bulk of their meal. These foods also add much-needed fiber to the diet. The guidelines recommend that the average adult eat at least three servings of vegetables and two servings of fruit a day.

Sugar and salt are other concerns. According to a National Restaurant Association survey, more than 60 percent of nutritionally committed patrons wish that restaurants offered menu items cooked without salt.

Although the dietary guidelines do not give any specific recommendations for sodium, the National Academy of Sciences suggests that Americans take in no more than 2,400 milligrams of sodium a day (about a teaspoonful of table salt). Current consumption rates range anywhere from 3,000 to 6,000 milligrams per day.

With the exception of yeast breads, salt can be eliminated from almost all recipes without altering texture, appearance and other physical properties. Operators trying to cut down on the amount of salt they use should start out very gradually. Reduce the amount of salt used by half and then slowly decrease the amount until it is eliminated. Since salt occurs naturally in food, getting enough salt in the diet is not a problem.

In addition to cooking without salt, operators can avoid salty processed foods. Homemade stocks, soups, sauces and gravies are much lower in sodium than their canned or powdered counterparts. Other ways to satisfy patrons who want to reduce their salt intake are: Season foods with fresh or dried herbs and spices; use flavored vinegars; avoid high-sodium foods such as cured meats, pickled foods and canned goods; and use reduced-sodium products for items like soy sauce, broths and soups.

The empty calories provided by sugar are another cause for concern. Those interested in following a healthy diet will want to avoid excessive intakes of refined sugar, which can lead to tooth decay and obesity.

Chefs often add sugar unnecessarily to soups, stews and sauces. In most cases, this sugar can be significantly reduced, if not cut out completely, without sacrificing the quality of the recipe. In other cases, spices that enhance sweetness can be used to replace sugar. Cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, ginger, anise, fennel and mint are among the "sweet" spices For meats, fruit-based chutneys and spreads with no added sugar can easily be substituted for sugary glazes and sauces.

Cooks who wish to reduce the sugar in desserts and baked goods can offer items naturally sweetened with fruit. Fruit-based tarts, sorbets, cobblers and custards can be prepared with little added sugar and no loss in flavor. For a simple, refreshing dessert, serve fresh or juice-packed canned fruit or fruit salad. As a stand-in for sugar-laden cakes and pies, try offering quick breads and muffins flavored with fruits and spices. Often the sugar called for in a rich dessert recipe may be cut by one-quarter to one-third without affecting the product. With a little experimentation, the foodservice operator can reduce the sugar in many high-calorie desserts.

Using artificial sweeteners as an alternative sweetening agent is another option for foodservice operations catering to the health-conscious. Saccharine, aspartame (Nutrasweet) or the recently approved acesulfame-K (Sunette) are widely available artificial sweeteners. When using these sweeteners in recipes, cooks should test the product first, since some sweeteners may leave a bitter or metallic aftertaste. Also, aspartame is unable to withstand high temperatures, so it has limited applications. One of the best ways to offer sugar substitutes is to provide them to patrons who wish to use them in place of table sugar.

By reading labels, foodservice operators can become aware of foods that contain hidden sugars. These sugars may appear in the form of honey, syrup, glucose, dextrose, fructose, corn sweetener, molasses and fruit-juice concentrate.

The National Restaurant Association's publication *A Nutrition Guide for the Restaurateur* offers guidance for menu modification. Methods of delivering nutrition information to patrons are outlined in the association's *Ingredients and Nutrition Information* booklet. These publications can be purchased by calling (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960.

For a single free copy of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, write to the Consumer Information Center, Department 514-X, Pueblo, CO 81009.

—Diane Welland, R.D.

A taste of adventure

While waiting tables during high school, Carolyn Claycomb wished she were in the back of the house preparing food instead of in the front of the house serving it. Traveling to Europe with her husband, Claycomb's interest in food was fed further by all the culinary delights she sampled in various countries. This interest led her to become a chef and to open Carolyn's restaurant a year and a half ago in Columbus, Ohio.

Claycomb's knowledge of food and cooking has changed and evolved, but her main philosophy of cooking has not. "Food is meant to be enjoyed and to be fun. I never take it so seriously that I can't have fun with it. I try not to overanalyze food, because it should be a source of pleasure," she says.

Part of Claycomb's fun with food comes from changing the menu daily to focus on whatever style of cooking has caught her fancy at the moment. One thing that does not change is her use of seasonal, fresh ingredients in her contemporary American cuisine.

"I change the menu every single day, but it is always contemporary. I enjoy so many different kinds of cuisine—I like dealing with all kinds of ethnic food. I'll get on a kick about some kind of food for a while because I'm excited by the cuisine, and that will be reflected on the menu," she says.

Focusing on the use of fresh, high-quality, seasonal ingredients saves her money, she says, because there is less waste. "I use everything. I find ways of using scraps in other dishes to stretch out the food. By buying seasonal foods, I save money because they are readily available and thus less costly," she says. To save money, Claycomb recommends that chefs experiment with local produce and less expensive cuts of meat to make appetizing and low-cost entrees.

Carolyn Claycomb

Carolyn's is in a 100-year-old building in the German Village area of Columbus. Although the building is charming, its advanced age can make for high operating costs. Claycomb says that taking good care of her equipment and having it serviced regularly helps to rein in costs.

The upscale restaurant's decor is modern except for a huge antique carved wooden bar that, with the exception of Claycomb's food, is the focal point of the restaurant.

Claycomb says that she doesn't think her method of cooking will ever settle down to just one style. "I like experimenting and changing too much to just cook in one style," she says. She does think that over time restaurants will change by "swinging back from the interest in homestyle cooking. I think customers are finally going to realize that 'Gee, this really is homestyle food and I can get this at home, so why am I here?' When they are eating out, people will want to have food that they can't have at home, maybe because the ingredients are hard to come by or because they don't know how to cook in that particular style. Then cooking will go back to uniqueness and adventure." And when the next wave of customer insurrection begins, Claycomb will most likely be among the intrepid culinary leaders who are satisfying patrons with a taste of adventure.

—Jennifer Batty

If you would like to be featured in this column, write to Jennifer Batty, ***Restaurants USA,*** 1200 17th Street, NW, Washington DC 20036.

PHYLLO NEST FILLED WITH SMOKED SHELLFISH AND SUN-DRIED TOMATO/ROASTED GARLIC SAUCE

Serves 8

Ingredients:

4 sheets phyllo pastry
2 lbs. smoked shellfish (Claycomb uses a mixture of shrimp, scallops and mussels)
Unsalted butter, melted (as needed)
3 Tbs. dried bread crumbs
1 head garlic
2 ozs. sun-dried tomatoes, rinsed
2 cups heavy cream
½ cup cider vinegar
½ cup dry white wine
1 tspn. unsalted butter
1 shallot, chopped
4 ozs. butter
Salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

For phyllo nests

To prepare phyllo nests, cut each sheet of phyllo into 8 squares. Lightly brush 8 ovenproof cups with melted butter. Brush 1 phyllo square with melted butter. Sprinkle with bread crumbs. Place in a prepared cup. Brush and stack 3 more squares of phyllo into the cup. Prepare 7 more phyllo nests in the same manner. Bake at 350°F for 10 minutes, or until phyllo is golden. Remove nests from cups.

For pastry filling

To prepare filling, place garlic in a 350°F oven and bake for 45 minutes, or until soft. Squeeze pulp from garlic head. Place in food processor with the sun-dried tomatoes and process until finely chopped.

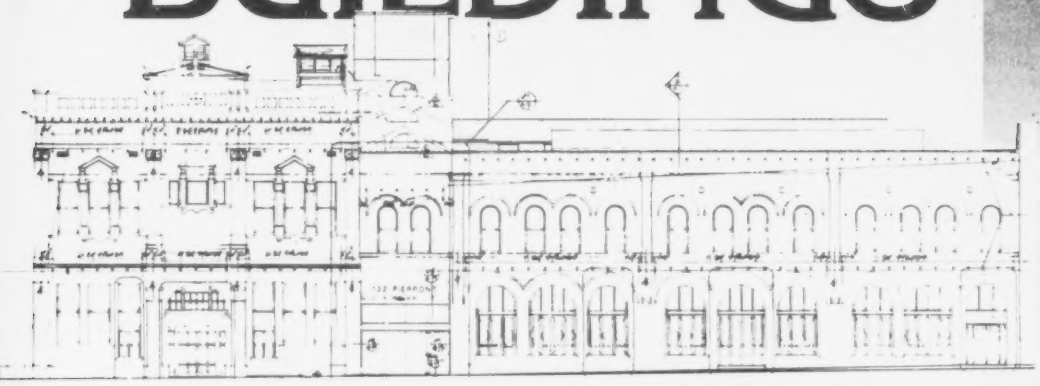
Over low heat, reduce cream to 1 cup. Saute shallot in 1 teaspoon of butter. Add vinegar and wine. Add reduced cream. Simmer 5 minutes. Strain. Gradually whisk in butter. Add the sun-dried tomato-garlic mixture to the sauce. Season with salt and black pepper to taste.

Stir the smoked shellfish into the sauce. Place mixture in the prepared phyllo nests. Serve immediately.

—Courtesy of Carolyn Claycomb

Nutritional analysis per serving: 557 calories, 28 grams protein, 27 grams carbohydrate, 39 grams fat, 720 mg. sodium, 213 mg. cholesterol

RESTAURANTS IN HISTORIC BUILDINGS



HISTORY FLAVORS THESE EATING PLACES

by Mary Kincaid

Nothing makes a stronger design statement than opening a restaurant in a historic building.

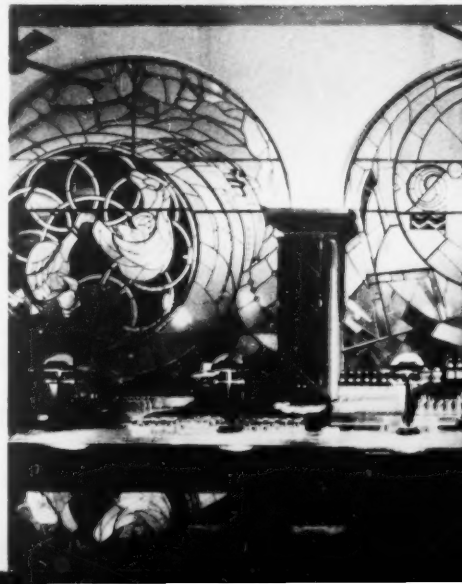
A landmark location gives patrons a reason to try a restaurant, regardless of what is known about the establishment. "You can depend on the food to bring people back to a restaurant the second time, but it is the design that invites them in and sets an agreeable mood the first time," says architect M. Louis Ulrich of FFKR Architects/Planners in Salt Lake City.

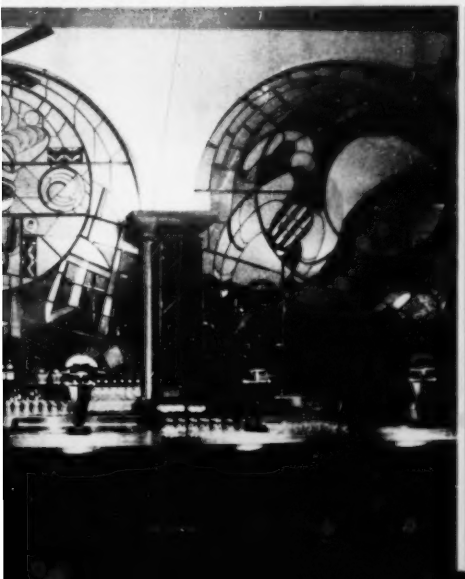
In addition, a 20 percent tax credit for rehabilitating a historic site brings a gleam to the eyes of some restaurant investors as they envision renovating a forlorn structure into a new restaurant. Carrying out such a transformation, however, and qualifying for registration with the National Trust for Historic Preservation in order to get a tax break, requires time, research, skillful design, money, paperwork, paperwork and paperwork. In Salt Lake City, in Cleveland and in Lexington, Kentucky, three such efforts have attracted an appreciative clientele and community praise.

A high school turned trattoria

The company Gastronomy, Inc., was responsible for transforming the building that housed Salt Lake City's first high school into the Cafe Pierpont and the Baci Club and Trattoria, now one of the most popular dining spots in Utah's capital city. By the time owners John Williams, Tom Guinney, Thomas Sieg and Marco Schienz tackled the 1897 Pierpont Building (which now houses the restaurant, club and cafe) as a rehab project in a historic district, they had already honed their skills on several previous rehabs-into-restaurants, all of which are now thriving. The owners decided to turn this historic spot into an Italian trattoria and to rent the upper floors for office space.

Things went well at first. First Security Bank had confidence in Gastronomy's track record with rehabilitations, and historical research seemed to have produced the necessary documentation for a historic site. But the initial bid for registration with the National Trust for Historic Preservation failed, in spite of the pages of architectural feature documentation,





The Baci Club and Trattoria and the Cafe Pierpont are located in a former Salt Lake City high school building.

Groined arches and a back-lit glass clock impress first-time diners at the Trattoria.

Colorful suspended glass panels separate the bar and dining areas.

Photos by Douglas Kahn

At Cleveland's Haymarket Restaurant, in the art deco Landmark Office Tower, bar patrons may be seated in a former bank vault.

photos and history submitted. Gastronomy appealed, going to Washington DC a second time, after six months of additional research to locate examples of registered structures with similar characteristics. They won the appeal, agreeing to make some window changes. In June 1986 the building was registered, and the $2.7 million restoration began. But not without considerable effort.

Co-owner John Williams had visited Italy, where the food, wine, seductive architecture and art tempted him to bring Italian ambience to Salt Lake City. Confident that the American craze for Italian clothes, cars, furniture and pasta would make an Italian restaurant work, Williams took key staff members from Gastronomy on a second Italian trip to evaluate what could best be adapted in Salt Lake City. Following that, trips to Italian restaurants in Chicago and on both coasts helped them to gauge what items would be most likely to appeal to American taste buds. For example, the group determined that Americans prefer more sauce on their pasta than Italians do, and Williams was perfectly willing to accommodate. "It's not our job to educate the clientele, but to please them," Williams says.

But creating an Italian trattoria from the print shop, sheet-metal shop and warehouse that had successively occupied the former high school building posed a series of problems. A vast, awkward cavern confronted the owners and the architect.

"Our biggest problem was to make the tall interior space interesting," says architect Ulrich. Floor-to-ceiling columns interfered with a graceful use of the space. But Ulrich solved that problem by designing groined arches, based on the columns, that curve upward to create an enchanting resemblance to Northern Italian ceilings.

To make the battered and warped warehouse floor reflect an Italian mood, the firm used a poured terrazzo floor.

To bring people all the way in to the 375-seat restaurant and club, a central staircase was added, creating more interest. Topped by a back-lit, etched colored-glass clock that is nine feet in diameter, the stairs not only present patrons with an eye-catching conversation piece, but they also lead adventurous patrons up to a new mezzanine where artwork both there and below gives diners a piquant reward for the eyes.

The coatrack problem

Having already drawn customers in with the fascinating ceiling and staircase, Ulrich faced another, more practical, challenge: "Coats create a real design problem with restaurants," says Ulrich. Fortunately, Ulrich found a Utah manufacturer to extend the height of the 16 imported Italian lamps, modifying them to hold coatracks. At an eight-foot level, the lamps now cast a pleasant glow on diners, who can also eye their wraps.

When the weather warms, those choosing to dine alfresco find a perfect spot on a long deck transformed from the former loading dock; it's another eyesore made appealing.

A magical solution was used to solve a restaurant problem that is special to Utah, where by law a restaurant's bar area must be separated from the main dining space. To solve this design challenge, graphic designer Rob Magiera and glass artist William Lettig were commissioned, and with three others they spent six

Photos by Mort Tucker

months sandblasting, beveling and leading three 13-foot glass panels. Suspended in such a way that they reflect and refract light, the panels separate teetotaling diners from legal drinkers.

One of the most attention-getting maneuvers in the Baci Trattoria success story was the use of the neighboring Phillips Gallery as a liaison between regional artists, the architect and the owners. From names suggested by gallery director Bonnie Phillips, Ulrich and Williams selected seven artists, including painters, a ceramist and a graphic artist, who collaborated on an Italian-themed, 40-foot, mixed-media mural. Merging skills and artistic personalities to create an eye-catching melange of figures, trompe l'oeil arches and still life brought useful publicity to the artists and Baci Trattoria.

A Cleveland classic

Cleveland diners are now able to enjoy a drink within the solid surroundings of a bank vault at the Haymarket Restaurant in downtown Cleveland. The owners of the Haymarket revamped a site within Landmark Office Tower, which was listed with the Register of Historic Places. Because of the building's status, some special paperwork had to be submitted to allow for the revamping.

Submitting an application for the National Register of Historic Places brought no pain to Don Klier, then manager of the Haymarket Restaurant. By hiring a consulting firm specializing in such application work, the owners and the architect saved time and effort. "We had only to send Benjamin D. Rickey & Co. the architectural documentation and sketches, adding some information by phone, so we had no problems there," recalls project architect Alan Fodor of Herman Galvin Gibans, Inc.

Letting someone else take care of the application was a wise move, because review bodies in Cleveland could easily overwhelm a neophyte hoping to make use of a historic building. In addition to approval from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the State Historic Preservation Office, projects in Cleveland may face a design review board in a Public Land Protected District, the Fine Arts Advisory Committee of the City Planning Commission and the Cleveland Landmarks Commission. An unwary owner could encounter a delay as long as six months. On the other hand, some of the advice from a series of reviewers might prove highly valuable. If no public money is involved in a project, the routine is shortened.

Landmark Office Tower, an art deco building, stands as a downtown centerpiece, its exterior virtually unaltered since construction in the 1920s. The building even includes its original metal window surrounds.

Trouble arose, though, when time came to make holes in the walls to install ventilation. This part of the structure had been occupied by Midland Bank. "We planned to retain the vault area as the bar, keeping steel security boxes in place," says architect Fodor. "But when demolition began to make ventilation holes, we found concrete and steel-plate walls 18 inches thick—very difficult to get through," recalls Fodor.

Ceilings posed another problem: They were too low. To manage air-duct space and still allow headroom, the Haymarket renovation crew had to use special flattened ducts, covered by acoustic panels and drywall. Setbacks during ventilation, electrical and plumbing procedures all contributed to making this a million-dollar project.

A happy discovery in the renovation of the old building came during the researching of old drawings that revealed forgotten doorfront grills. Unearthing the buried treasures and cleaning the exquisite bronze grills made them into restaurant highlights. The grills are now screens dividing two of the three dining areas. Dark wood paneling on the restaurant's perimeter walls sets off the many brass, bronze and copper antique materials saved from the original structure. Spotlighted against the wall, they complement screens and the antique railing rimming the raised dining area. Clients tread on dark red carpeting to reach tables where they savor, among other presentations, veal rollatini, a signature dish on the Continental menu.

Opened in 1988, the Haymarket attracted downtown shoppers and office workers at lunch and early cocktail time. But foot traffic diminishes shortly after five in downtown Cleveland. Because of the historic-building designation, the Haymarket is not allowed to use bold signage that would announce its presence to motorists whizzing past.

Initially, this requirement for low-key signage was a problem. "The gold-leaf sign on our front window just failed to attract people," says Don Klier. "For months we waited for dinner clientele. Our problem vanished when the new mall and the Ritz-Carlton opened in adjacent buildings, bringing a surge of business at dinnertime."

These openings and increased print advertising have overcome the problems of the Haymarket's discreet signage. Evening parking, another common problem in downtown Cleveland, has presented no difficulty since the Haymarket began offering valet parking in the building's garage after nine-to-five workers have cleared out the garage each day.

A Lexington landmark

At Dudley's Restaurant, the anchor

spot in Lexington, Kentucky's Dudley Square, tourists and townspeople enjoy celebrating special occasions. The Italian architectural style, the 1881 construction and the rich history that included a founder of the Daughters of the American Revolution, assured the former Dudley School a place in the National Register.

Debbie Long and John Sheay happened along just as the $1 million renovation project was nearing completion as a shopping center. Needing an alluring restaurant as anchor for Dudley Square, former owner and developer Richard Hurley agreed to lease space to Long and Sheay.

"We started on a shoestring," Long recalls, "and we had to borrow money and labor to make it work. We really had no operating capital, and it's amazing that we've survived, with only $42,000 to launch the restaurant."

Although John Sheay had restaurant management experience at a New York Hyatt, and both Sheay and Long had worked in Denver restaurants, their debut as owner-operators brought them a new viewpoint on business.

An early shock came during the job of transforming the basement into a kitchen. "It was like a catacomb!" says Long. Instead of venting through side walls, as they had planned, they were required to carry the ventilating and hood system up to the third-floor roof to meet health codes. Venting at the roof level, above 14-foot ceilings, made the project much costlier than they had expected. Ducts now run through the middle of the dining room, hugging the inside wall.

A second surprise to Sheay and Long was the amount of labor involved in making some unique bar tables. "We made a wonderful discovery in retrieving marble slabs from the school's former bathroom stalls," Long recalls. Long hours were involved in cutting 12 tabletops and making tables from the slabs themselves, with the help and guidance of hired carpenters.

The ½-inch-thick mirror mounted behind the bar took even more labor to prepare. The mirror and the solid-oak bar top took eight to ten hours a day for two-and-a-half weeks for them and a visiting relative to strip, refinish and install.

Getting the 100-seat dining room and bar ready for the 1981 opening happened only as the result of much love and labor donated by friends and family. Once the restaurant opened, labor costs, breakage, labor turnover and taxes meant more unexpected headaches. Having become enchanted with the old school building and having taken the courage to create a restaurant, Long and Sheay had expected to draw a breath of relief once the restaurant opened. Instead, they have faced the daily business struggles that all restaurateurs deal with.

One innovation that keeps Long content is a courtyard dining spot that owes its existence to the fact that the former school building had a schoolyard. Dudley's has used the space well, opening an outdoor dining area two years after opening. That step increased the spot's popularity and led other restaurants to open terraces. "Ours is the best, though," says Long, "since the courtyard is bordered by three huge 100-year-old tulip poplars that shade it. Those trees and the grass are very refreshing and beautiful." Beautiful as it is, that former schoolyard (which seats 60) brings added income only on the 45 days a year that are certain to be dry but not sizzling.

Dudley's Restaurant features the traditional in both decor and cuisine, and there is no attempt to re-create a schoolroom atmosphere in the two dining rooms. Customers enjoy fresh vegetables, seafood, pasta, steak and roast beef.

As a special ongoing feature, local artists display their work in changing exhibits. Because so many customers are involved in horse racing, a large donation of win pictures adorns the bar area.

The sounds of the winter heating system emerge from original clanking radiators, which seem to amuse clientele. Although carpeting covers the dining-room floors to mute such noise, the entryway's handsome maple flooring and stairway, as well as the beaded-board pine wainscoting, remind visitors of the former school's elegance.

Two sections of the building, 10 feet apart, feature an adaptation: doors that have been cut into walls, with a five-by-eight-foot glass atrium connecting them. The fact that plans for this change passed muster with the Bluegrass Trust, which oversees historic-building designations in Lexington, is due to the fact that the small nook is not prominent or easily seen from the street. Since exterior signage is not allowed, Dudley's features a lighted signboard on the corner of the lawn.

The rehab challenge

In the three cases above, lovely restaurants have emerged from the confines of a historic architectural site. It cannot be overstated, however, that such projects are a considerable challenge for both restaurateur and architect. According to David Evans of Ann Arbor, Michigan's architectural firm Quinn Evans Architects, which specializes in preservation work, a person considering a rehab project always faces a question: Is it worth the expense to save and adapt an old building to meet today's safety standards and fire codes?

Evans has seen a variety of snares during his 15 years of historic-renovation experience. He points out that owners often open a restaurant on the first floor of a historic building, planning upper floors for later renovation as office or living space. Unaware of the tight code requirements for such uses and for their separation from restaurant areas, owners learn too late that meeting such requirements can drive costs out of sight. Evans warns that codes and deed restrictions must be anticipated in the early planning stage. Of course, retaining original architectural details and conforming to historic use does not necessarily mean that contemporary design or alteration is forbidden.

On the positive side, rehabilitating an old structure brings countless advantages to the community, and rehabilitating a structure as a restaurant can reinforce historic pride in a particularly tasteful way. ⌟

Mary Kincaid is a writer in Ann Arbor, Michigan

NOISE LEVELS IN RESTAURANTS

WHAT'S THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF SOUND?

by Julie Fintel

Stuart Armstrong

A businessperson hoping to close a deal probably would not take a client to a restaurant where patrons stand three deep at the bar, rock music is turned up loud and kitchen noises compete with the noise of customers talking, shouting and laughing. On the other hand, a young stockbroker seeking to unwind after a hectic week might seek out just such a restaurant. What's noisy and annoying to one person is lively and exciting to another. The restaurateur who wants to know whether to turn the volume up or down must take a look at the people who frequent the establishment and why they come there.

Noise in a restaurant seems to be an issue in judging restaurants these days. Restaurant critics are mentioning it when they write reviews. For example, in a review of New York City restaurants in *TRAVELER* magazine, restaurant critic Mimi Sheraton had high praise for TriBeCa Grill but called it "hectic and deafening." She had good words for the food at Ferrier, but she also mentioned "the unending din and elbow-to-elbow seating." She called two other new hot spots "insanely noisy."

Whether a restaurant is noisy or not should depend upon the concept of the restaurant, says designer Andrew Young of New York City. Noise is one of the elements that, combined with decor, food and service, give a restaurant a certain feel or mood. For example, restaurants seeking to convey the feel of a bistro or a pub intentionally allow the noise level to be high. But a restaurant designed as a cozy, intimate retreat takes steps to hold down the noise.

Hand in hand with the role noise plays in atmosphere goes the role of noise in retaining a certain clientele. Restaurants geared toward young people are designed to be full of vitality—and that may translate into a high decibel level. If the clientele is mostly businesspeople, the noise level must be low enough that patrons can talk business while having lunch or dinner.

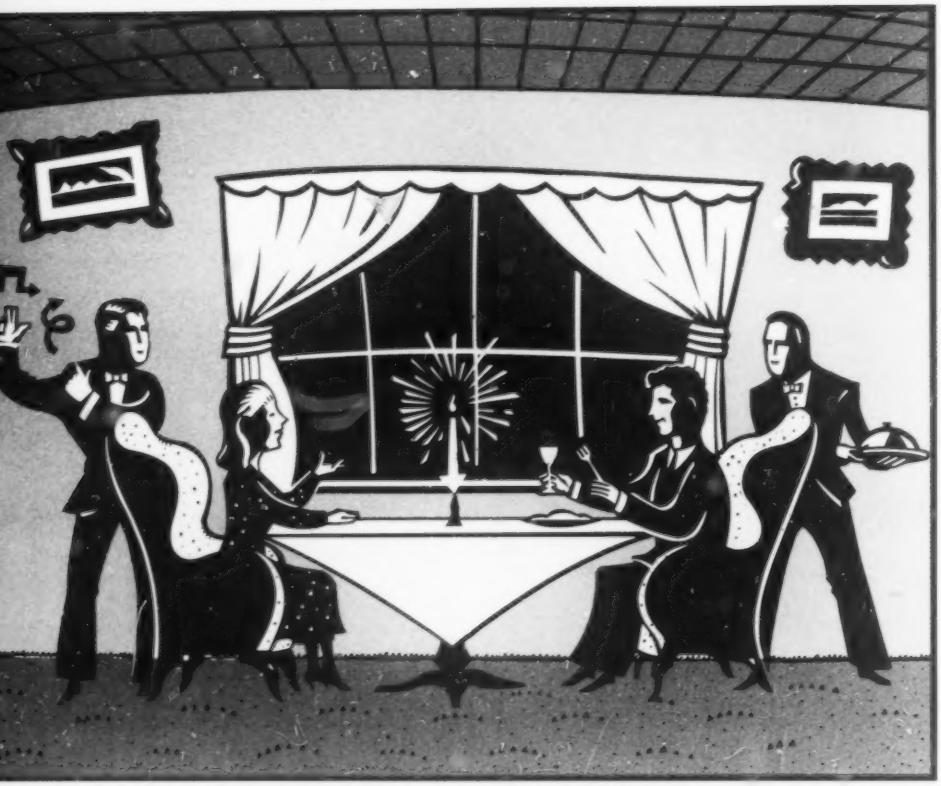
Adjusting the noise

Designer Young rehabilitated a restaurant (now called Beaches) in Palm Beach, Florida, that was not succeeding because the concept was not in tune with the market, which he described as "a very up crowd, a mix of young and old." As part of its change to a fun and funky place, the new restaurant adjusts the sound level of the music depending on the crowd it wants to attract. For example, the music is turned down at lunch and in the early evening, when an older clientele comes in. Later in the evening, to bring in the younger crowd, music volume is turned up.

Restaurant critic Sheraton says she has been monitoring noise in restaurants for the past seven or eight years, and she thinks that restaurants are getting noisier. When Sheraton goes out with her friends, they go to places where they can talk, she says. "But I don't like them dead either," she adds, "where you feel you have to whisper or else you will be overheard."

Where does noise in a restaurant come from? It comes from background music, conversations among customers, servers talking to each other, the clanging and clattering of dishes and silverware, and kitchen sounds such as exhaust fans and the banging of pots and pans. Once the sound is made, the way the interior is constructed will determine how the sound reverberates.

Hard surfaces make a restaurant noisier. Joan Vieweger, vice president of Perspectives/The Consulting Group, Inc., in Los Angeles, thinks the popular Mediterranean look, with



brick walls, tile floors and bare wooden tables, is one reason restaurants seem to be getting noisier.

High energy, high noise

Restaurant owners usually do not ask designers to create a "noisy restaurant," says Vieweger. Instead, they refer to an atmosphere of "high energy with lots of activity," she says. For some restaurateurs, a noisy atmosphere is the goal. Kevin Finch is the general manager of Border Grill in Santa Monica, which was voted the noisiest restaurant in the Los Angeles area by the *Los Angeles Times*. "Border Grill is a really casual, fun restaurant, and noise is a part of it," he says. Doug Roth, co-owner of Chicago's Bistro 110, adds, "People like places that are lively and upbeat; they make you feel good."

When restaurants begin to fill up, people begin to talk louder to be heard. So a full restaurant is often a noisy restaurant. People are attracted to restaurants that are crowded. The Border Grill may be one of the Los Angeles area's noisiest restaurants, but it is also one of the most popular, and part of the noise comes from people having a good time. "I like having too many people. If a restaurant is quiet, people ask, 'What's wrong?' " says Finch. The Border Grill even has a special party table built to seat 20, which Finch acknowledges can add to the noise when its occupants begin to loosen up.

At North Star Pub in New York City's South Street Seaport area, some customers have complained about the noise, but manager Deven Black doesn't intend to change anything. He explains that part of the problem comes from people crowded into the small area, speaking louder and louder to be heard. "I could reduce the number of customers," he says. "But that wouldn't be good business."

North Star Pub's decor also contributes to its noisiness. Built to resemble an English pub, it has bare wood tables, tile floors, 10-foot ceilings made of plank wood, and a bar where customers often stand to eat. Tablecloths and carpeting would cut down the noise, but it would also alter the pub-like atmosphere. Roth feels the same about tampering with the feel of his restaurant, Bistro 110. "We are a bistro, and people expect bistros to have hustle and bustle," he says, although he has added acoustical tile to the ceiling and put a few runners here and there on the bare wood floors to cut down on the noise somewhat.

Roth is also a believer in restaurants as theater. He thinks his French bistro environment helps transport people away from their workplace and the problems of the world.

Wolfgang Puck's latest restaurant, Eureka Restaurant & Brewery, in West Los Angeles, reflects the extroverted personality of the famous chef. The decor, designed by Puck's wife Barbara Lazaroff, uses high-tech materials in a neo-industrial style. The floors are slate, tables are bare wood, and a glass-brick wall separates the dining area from the bar. An open kitchen is responsible for the clanging of pots and pans, and the sounds of meats and fish sizzling on a grill mingle with the noises of the crowds. "If you want a romantic evening, we're not what you're looking for," says spokesperson Krestin Beaton. "We're fun and entertaining."

Carrying the idea of restaurants as theater to the extreme is another Los Angeles restaurant known for its high noise level—California Beach, a Japanese restaurant where earsplitting rock and roll is played and the sushi chefs lead cheers, clap along to the music, chug beers and yell raucous things in Japanese.

Besides adding to the atmosphere, noise sometimes has another function: It can be used to turn over tables more quickly. Diners are less likely to linger after a meal if the noise makes it difficult to talk.

Some like it quiet

Newman's La Bonne Auberge customers say the Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, restaurant is one of the quietest they have ever been in. To achieve the quiet, local designer Susan W. Welzien of S.W. Wells Design Associates put cushions on all the doors to keep them from slamming, put the kitchen in the rear and separated it from the dining area with a double wall. Welzien put the air compressors seven feet above the ceiling and moved the work area, which used to be in the middle of the dining room, to the back behind an insulated wall. In addition, the restaurant is carpeted, and it features an acoustically quiet ceiling. The waitstaff do their part by not talking to each other in the dining room, substituting hand signals in-

stead, and the kitchen workers do not yell in the kitchen.

Another restaurant known for its quiet is Notes, in the Sunset Marquis Hotel in West Hollywood, California. Paradoxically, a large part of the clientele of the hotel and restaurant are rock stars. The hotel was made famous by the rock band the Eagles in their song "Hotel California." "This is the home of rock and roll in California," says food and beverage director Giles Beeker. "Anybody who's anybody in the music industry stays here." Beeker says that when his famous clients dine, they want privacy. They need quiet because they often discuss business deals over a meal. Large Georgian wing chairs, loveseats for two, padded walls and a subdued color scheme give Notes a hushed, clubby atmosphere.

Carlucci's in Chicago, on the other hand, wanted an atmosphere that was casual but sophisticated—more on the side of liveliness than an inner sanctum. It was built in an old warehouse with a high ceiling—one large open space. But owner Joe Carlucci soon found he was losing customers because the restaurant was so noisy. "They would pull me aside and say, 'I loved your place—the atmosphere and the food—but I won't be back because it's too noisy. I can't do business here or talk to my family or friends.' " Carlucci put acoustical tile in the ceiling, moved the bar to the front (away from next to the dining room) and divided the open space into two dining areas. "I think people are becoming more sensitive to noise," Carlucci observes. "There needs to be some noise for liveliness and excitement, but too much noise becomes intrusive."

A balance

Some restaurants have even found ways to make both the party lovers and the peace-and-quiet lovers happy. Designer Adam Tihany of New York City says that in Europe there are restaurants with both noisy areas and quiet areas. He likens the arrangement to having a smoking and a nonsmoking area. These European restaurants have a formal dining room with tablecloths, carpeting and generous space between tables. The same restaurants also include a bistro-like area with bare tables and bare floors. When Tihany designed the three Bice restaurants for New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, he followed the European idea, incorporating a quiet fine-dining area and a livelier bistro area into one building. Tihany also likes to create a diversity of spaces in a restaurant, with some spaces designed for large parties and some set aside for quiet, intimate dining.

Whether your restaurant is a hub of activity or a sanctuary from the busy world, don't overlook the role of noise. If yours is designed to be a lively gathering spot, but you are losing customers because people are complaining about the noise, then it probably would be wise to take steps to dampen the sound. If yours is a restaurant so quiet you can hear a pin drop—and tables sit empty night after night—perhaps it's time to add a spark of energy in the form of some carefully planned noise. Finding the right amount of sound is a matter of knowing your customers. ⌟

Julie Fintel is a writer in Burke, Virginia

Turning down the sound

The more hard surfaces you have in your restaurant, the more noise you'll have. "Sound control is simple," says designer Adam Tihany of New York City. "Sound is created by the sound waves bouncing from surface to surface. So if you want it to be quieter, have as many soft and absorbing surfaces as possible, so the sound will stop bouncing."

Here are some ways to make your restaurant more acoustically comfortable if it is now noisier than you would like.

Draperies, upholstery, carpeting, rugs, tablecloths and padding underneath the cloths are some easy additions that soften sound. Use walls for soundproofing by covering them with padded fabric. Even artwork on canvas absorbs some of the sound. Tapestries are effective, too. Joan Vieweger, vice president of Perspectives/The Consulting Group, Inc., in Los Angeles, has used tapestries made of special sound-absorbing material like that used in recording studios. Large areas of glass act as reflectors of sound. Use draperies on windows or counter the effects of glass with soft surfaces elsewhere.

Installing acoustical tile in the ceiling is probably the most effective way to dampen sound, since the ceiling is usually the room's largest surface. Tiles can be put above a ceiling's surface as well as below.

Because the bar is almost always the noisiest area in a restaurant, keeping it away from the main dining area, or putting up insulated walls between the bar and the rest of the restaurant, can keep the noise from bothering diners.

Another way to cut the volume is to not encourage large parties or to separate them from the other diners. If you don't have an area set aside for large groups, consider movable partitions.

If people request a quiet table, don't put them near a large party or near the kitchen or service area.

Set a quiet mood for your restaurant with colors and lighting. Tihany says lighting is an underutilized method of bringing quiet to a restaurant. "Have you ever noticed," he asks, "that when the lights go down, people start to speak lower?"

Instruct the service staff to be more quiet. Servers should not yell to each other or to the cooks in the kitchen. They should refrain from letting the dishes and silverware bang against each other.

Insulate walls that separate the kitchen from the dining room with sound-absorbing material. Install a sound-absorbing ceiling in the kitchen, too. Dishwashers and ventilation fans should be mounted in such a way that they don't vibrate and cause excess noise.

Place tables farther apart. Diners seated close to other diners sometimes speak louder to be heard by their companions.

Break up a large area into smaller areas. Introduce nooks and crannies, curves, or a divider wall that juts out.

Turn the music down or off. The direction that speakers are aimed could make a difference, too. Vieweger recommends that owners of large restaurants consult a sound engineer for help in customizing a sound system.

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THE RESTAURANT AROUND THE CORNER

NEIGHBORHOOD RESTAURANTS ARE BACK IN STYLE

by Melanie A. Crosby

In these days of stiff competition and tight dollars, it takes more than just good food to bring customers in and keep them. It takes genuine hospitality, and few operations serve up a more heaping helping than the neighborhood restaurant—the friendly joint around the corner where neither the food nor the size of the bill ever comes as a surprise.

The *1991 Zagat New York City Restaurant Survey* makes special note of the significant number of establishments that are focusing not on widespread fame and culinary glitter but on neighborhood locals and the comforts of home. This trend toward neighborhood restaurants is happening well beyond New York, though, as casual neighborhood spots spring up from coast to coast. This is not so much an emerging trend as a re-emerging one; new operators today are discovering the secrets that many "neighborhood" restaurateurs have known for years.

The term "neighborhood restaurant" means different things to different people, and there are many facets to this local institution. Such a spot can be anything from the local lunchtime watering hole to the evening lingering spot, or it may be a special celebration destination. It's the place where the locals go, and it's the place where neighbors and friends meet.

"Our whole concept was to create a place where the neighborhood could come for something to drink and eat at a reasonable price," says Karyn Wagner, owner of Joe's Bar & Grill in New York City. "We wanted to make the whole experience so good they would come back again and again. So far, it's worked." Wagner estimates that about 80 percent of their business comes directly from the restaurant's West Village neighborhood. The restaurant has built its loyal following in just 15 months.

When Craig Bero, owner of the year-old restaurant Anglers & Writers, also in New York, opened his new establishment, he too hoped to create a neighborhood cafe. Apparently he has succeeded. According to Bero, 90 to 95 percent of his clientele are neighbors from Manhattan's West Village. "Our neighborhood is filled with artists, writers, journalists and theater people who are looking for a place to relax," says Bero. That's what he provides at Anglers & Writers.

Bero is also the owner of Village Atelier, a more upscale restaurant which he says is also a neighborhood joint. "At least 80 percent of my clientele at Atelier are regulars," he says. "I see some of the people at least two or three times per week. Even in snowstorms, we're packed. They're lined up outside waiting to get in."

Neighborhoods across America

Restaurants outside New York City know the value of the neighborhood as well. At the Hyde Street Bistro, in the Russian Hill neighborhood of San Francisco, the neighborhood has been a key to success since the establishment opened in 1989. "We have a very strong neighborhood following," says owner Albert Rainer. "It's very difficult for a new restaurant to get a loyal following, especially in San Francisco where there are so many choices and so many restaurants opening and closing."

Rainer estimates that 70 percent of his guests live in the neighborhood or at least the local area. The clientele is quite diverse, as is the neighborhood,

Fishing, literature and conversation provide the theme for Anglers & Writers, a homey neighborhood restaurant in Manhattan's West Village.

and includes young people as well as wealthier retirees. "The idea behind the restaurant was to create a restaurant that would represent the neighborhood. We have a very diversified guest list," he says.

Bob Shaughnessy, owner of The Other Place Pub in Boylston, Massachusetts (east of Worcester), has known the secret of neighborhood regulars for the 11 years he's been in business. "We have a lot of regulars here," he says. "This is the Boylston edition of 'Cheers,' " he laughs. "We have all the regular characters." Shaughnessy says at least 65 percent of his customers are locals, and many have been around for a long time. "This is a very friendly place," he says. "Everyone knows everyone else."

Customers are also drawn back time and again to The Wishing Well in the North County area of St. Louis. The restaurant has been in the same location for all of its 35 years, and it's a neighborhood landmark—or rather a landmark of what the neighborhood used to be. "This neighborhood has gone through many changes," says owner Stephen Molina, "but we haven't. We're still here, and we're still doing things the same way."

At The Wishing Well, a bit of the "old neighborhood" is still going strong, as most of Molina's core of regular customers have since moved out of the North County neighborhood but still come back to the local restaurant hangout. "Many of our customers are second and third-generation diners," says Molina. "They remember being here in booster chairs, and now their kids are in booster chairs. And their parents still eat here, too."

Coy's Steakhouse in Little Rock, Arkansas, is also a neighborhood landmark. "Coy's is known all over the state," says Trudy Moore, director of marketing for the steakhouse, "but most of our business in Little Rock is local. We have very loyal customers." Coy's, she says, is known as the place to go for a special occasion. "If there's something to celebrate, they come to Coy's," she says. Sixty percent of Coy's business comes from local celebratory banquets.

Know your neighbors

What is the key to the success of these neighborhood joints? It's the neighbors themselves, the customers—and successful neighborhood operators take extra steps to get to know their customers as they would the people next door. "Getting to know the people and building on that relationship is what's important," says Anglers & Writers' Bero.

How do you make a customer a neighbor? First and foremost, you learn the person's name. "If you ask people what their favorite restaurant is or where they like to go, they will say 'where they know my name,' " says Albert Rainer. His Hyde Street staff makes a special point of learning patrons' names, drawing them from reservation lists and business cards. "When guests come in for the second or third time, we will call them by name," says Rainer. At Anglers & Writers, everyone is on a first-name basis, even the few famous folks who drop in every now and then. The same is true at nearby Joe's Bar & Grill. "We know all of our neighborhood regulars by name," says Karyn Wagner, "and they know us. They know exactly which table they want and its number."

Taking care of the regulars

Neighborhood customers are the "in" crowd of the neighborhood establishment, and many restaurants offer these regulars special deals and promotions to which outsiders are not entitled. Coy's Steakhouse sends mailings to its regular customers about once a month. The mailer often advertises a special deal for mailing-list customers only, such as buy-one-get-one-free specials. During Christmas of 1990, Coy's sponsored a "Get Mugged at Coy's" promotion, which entitled each customer who purchased $50 worth of gift certificates to receive a gift box of four Irish coffee mugs already wrapped and ready to go under the tree.

The Other Place Pub offers its regulars a Supersaver Supper Club card, which contains 30 numbers. Each time a customer eats in the restaurant, one number is punched with the Pub's special punch. Every fifth meal is a free lunch; every tenth meal is a free dinner. "The card encourages those guys that come in for lunch every day to come back for that free dinner," says Shaughnessy. Each dinner purchase of $4.95 or more also gives the diner a chance at the week's lucky-number drawing. The winning number is posted for several days, and customers must come in to see it.

In addition to special deals, regular customers are also often treated to special events—as if they were part of the family. This past Christmas, Joe's Bar & Grill held a tree-trimming party and invited all its regular customers. Each customer was asked to bring an ornament to add to the tree. "The tree looked great," says Wagner, "and each customer could see how he or she had contributed. They'd bring friends in and say, 'See, there's my ornament.' " On a smaller scale, Joe's serves a special Sunday night "soup and sandwich supper" designed primarily for the neighborhood regulars, and there are many spur-of-the-moment gatherings. "It's very much a 'Hey, what's happening at Joe's this week?' type of thing," says Wagner.

Craig Bero, too, believes in celebrating with the regulars. Although New Year's Eve is considered by many restaurateurs to be the most lucrative night of the year, Bero takes it off the books at the Village Atelier and invites all of his regular customers to a party at the restaurant. "It's to show them what great customers they've been all year," he says.

A home away from home

Atmosphere is an important element in a successful "neighborhood" restaurant. Decor can vary widely, but comfort is the key. Neighborhood restaurants are an extension of the neighborhood and an extension of home—casual, familiar and comfortable. "This is a very homey place," says Shaughnessy of the Other Place Pub's warm tavern-like atmosphere. The decor at Bero's Village Atelier is reminiscent of a country inn. Accord-

ing to Bero, dining at the Village Atelier "doesn't feel like you're eating in a restaurant; it feels like someone's home."

Many neighborhood restaurants actually resemble neighborhood homes. Both Joe's Bar & Grill and Anglers & Writers are housed in historic areas of New York's Greenwich Village, and the owners were restricted from changing the understated storefronts when they took over the sites. Such constraints, however, add to the establishments' neighborhood appeal. "We have a very unobtrusive storefront with a very small window," says Wagner of Joe's. "You really have to know where this place is to find it, and the neighborhood does." "We don't even have a sign out front," says Bero, "just a little plaque by the door. But our customers know where to find us."

For Bero, it's important that his neighborhood restaurants look and feel like home on the inside as well as outside. Tables are never pushed together, and lounge areas with comfortable couches are provided for customers. Although each of Bero's establishments could easily double its occupancy level, Village Atelier seats only 38, and Anglers & Writers seats only 45. "People like space," says Bero. "It helps them relax."

Bero's couches encourage conversation as well as relaxation. The restaurants offer no gimmicks and no music, he says, to allow this different sort of entertainment to flourish. "I believe a cafe without music becomes a cafe with music," says Bero, referring to the melody of conversation. "People tend to linger, and I encourage it," he says. One communal table at Village Atelier begins the night empty but eventually fills with "people who somehow all know each other," which allows for great interaction and "spontaneous things to happen intellectually," he says. A centerpiece of Anglers & Writers is an antique rolltop desk filled with books and writing instruments that customers are welcome to use.

For many customers and operators, a homelike atmosphere is closely linked with nostalgia. Many successful neighborhood spots concentrate on old-fashioned "comfort" foods of days gone by and serve traditional American fare such as burgers, soups and pies. "Many of our recipes date from the 1920s. I even run an ad in the *Dispatch* with a picture of my grandfather to show people that things haven't changed," says The Wishing Well's Molina, who believes that the restaurant's commitment to the old ways is the major reason the customers keep coming back. "We still do things the way restaurants used to do them," he says.

Joe's Bar & Grill specializes in classic cocktails like Manhattans and martinis and in simple, uncomplicated foods like chicken pot pie and Caesar salad prepared tableside, foods that Wagner says "don't overwhelm the experience."

Nostalgic decor often plays a part in the "neighborhood" restaurant. Wagner describes her establishment as "an updated '90s neighborhood saloon" with brick walls and tapestry banquettes providing extra warmth. "They say that everything old is what's new again, and that's the way we think here," she says.

Anglers & Writers' atmosphere is reminiscent of the small fishing village in Wisconsin where Bero grew up. The restaurant "looks more like something you'd find in the North Woods of Wisconsin than in Manhattan's West Village," says Bero. "It's the kind of place where I could talk to my grandfather about who was catching what fish that day and what farmer was having trouble with his crops." The cafe even houses an extensive collection of old fishing gear.

A comfortable price

In today's uncertain economic climate, customers have become exceedingly more value-conscious, and neighborhood operators have obliged by providing good value. A comfortable price is as important as a casual atmosphere. Craig Bero opened Anglers & Writers as a less expensive alternative to Village Atelier. He refers to Anglers & Writers as a "tea room," where just about everything on the menu is priced between $6 and $7. At The Wishing Well in St. Louis, a complete meal costs less than $15, including drinks. "We like to think of ourselves as providing gourmet food without the gourmet prices," says owner Molina. San Francisco's Hyde Street Bistro offers its dishes for less than $25 per person, a moderate price in the Bay area. Value is of utmost importance to Rainer, and he tries to keep prices as reasonable as possible. "Our guests are always pleasantly surprised when they get the check," he says, "and our lower prices make us available to many people."

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Some neighborhood operators have introduced new, less expensive dining options to their local areas. For example, Anglers & Writers offers an afternoon tea—a novelty in the Village. Diners are served a full English tea complete with fresh scones and a plate of sandwiches for $10. "We're booked up months in advance," says Bero. "Many customers make the tea an early dinner."

Service with a smile and a familiar face

Value, of course, goes beyond good food and low prices. Customers pay for the total dining experience, and service can often make or break a value. At neighborhood restaurants, customers are, by definition, neighbors, and they expect to be treated as such. A familiar face and a smile will bring them back again. "We're very friendly people here," says Karyn Wagner of the service staff at Joe's. "We're very un-New York. People say 'hi' and 'bye' to you here. People greet you at the door. Our customers are special people when they walk through that door."

The Other Place Pub's Bob Shaughnessy agrees. "One key to our success is the service," he says. "We've had a lot of the same help here for the 11 years we've been

Bob Shaughnessy takes the time to get to know the regulars at The Other Place Pub in Boylston, Massachusetts.

here, and everyone knows everyone else." The Wishing Well's Stephen Molina has several servers who have been on the staff for more than 20 years. "They've been here a long time, and they're good servers," he says. "They are one reason we have so much repeat business." Rainer's Hyde Street Bistro also has strong regular staff members who have become familiar to the customers and have developed a reputation for going out of their way to make dining an enjoyable experience. "After all," says Rainer, "we are not just selling food and wine, we are selling hospitality; and that requires more effort."

Hospitality does indeed require more work, but at successful neighborhood restaurants, the extra effort seems effortless. Rainer says many of his customers request vegetarian dishes or are on restricted diets and can't have certain spices. "Whatever it takes to make someone happy here, we do it," he says.

The larger neighborhood

Although customers are important to a neighborhood restaurant, there is an equally vital element—the neighborhood itself. Involvement with the local community contributes to a strong business and a strong neighborhood.

Neighborhood involvement can take many forms. First, it can serve as a public relations tool—a way to build an establishment's image. Local fundraisers and charity events can do much to heighten a restaurant's reputation in a local area. The Wishing Well in St. Louis supports local churches through advertisements in their bulletins and works for fundraisers whenever possible. "We work long, hard hours here," says Molina, "but we help out whenever we can."

Hyde Street Bistro's Rainer shares that enthusiasm, but cautions that "if you do too much, you get stretched too far and do little good." His restaurant focuses on a few community commitments such as school programs and fundraisers for Mt. Zion Hospital. Anglers & Writers, in addition to advertising events at local schools and St. Luke's Church, is heavily involved with issues of interest to both customers and Mr. Bero himself, such as Trout Unlimited, an environmental group of fly fishermen in New York that work for water quality and conservation. Coy's Steakhouse recently supported the local Girl Scout cookie drive, sponsoring the top-sales scout in the local newspaper, hanging posters throughout the restaurant and serving Girl Scout cookies free for dessert.

Neighborhood involvement can do far more than just boost your name—it can advertise it without the high cost of an ad campaign. Since many neighborhood establishments have limited advertising budgets, using community activities as promotional events makes sound sense. "It's a great way to get our name into the community," says Trudy Moore of the many promotional items Coy's distributes at local events. Moore also believes strongly in working with other merchants for cross-promotional gain. "We're a very loyal community," she says, "and we work well together." Coy's recently participated in a bridal fair that featured local florists, photographers and dress shops, and it gave Coy's a chance to showcase its banquet facilities. Other forms of community support, such as buying ad space in church programs, nonprofit theater programs or school publications, can also be inexpensive and rewarding—as well as helpful. "Just small things to keep our name in front of the community and help out," says Joe's Bar & Grill's Wagner. Sponsoring local sports teams, as The Wishing Well does, is also a way to flash your name across a field.

Neighborhood establishments are involved in many activities for the sake of the neighborhood itself: to help it grow and develop, to help it stay the same or to make it again what it once was. Even though the bulk of The Wishing Well's regulars are part of a neighborhood long gone by, Molina works diligently to improve his North County neighborhood of today. As a director of the local Chamber of Commerce and a member of a local development commission, he keeps careful track of local trends and works to rehabilitate neighborhoods and businesses. "We are turning upwards again," Molina reports hopefully.

Hyde Street Bistro's Albert Rainer belongs to the Russian Hill Neighborhood Association to work for the betterment of his community. "I strongly believe in giving something back [to the neighborhood]," he says. "You owe something to your fellow citizens who support you."

Craig Bero contributes to the development of his neighborhood in a slightly different way: He concentrates on expanding the artistic life of the community. Anglers & Writers opens the floor to area musicians on Sunday nights for small concerts, and he occasionally showcases a small local theater company. "We never charge admission," he says. "These are community activities. We invite the regulars in."

A network of support

As Hyde Street Bistro's Albert Rainer says, the key to a successful neighborhood restaurant is support—mutual support. The door is always open; the atmosphere, relaxed. The staff is friendly and familiar; the food is "comforting" in both style and price. And restaurants that offer such neighborhood comforts get comfort in return—the comfort of knowing that the regulars will come back and that the neighborhood will see the restaurant through good times and bad. "People wonder how we're making it," says Bero, "with restaurants closing down all the time here. But I go in there every day and there are the people, the same people. We would be lost without the neighborhood. That's how we're making it."

Melanie Crosby is managing editor of ***Restaurants USA.***

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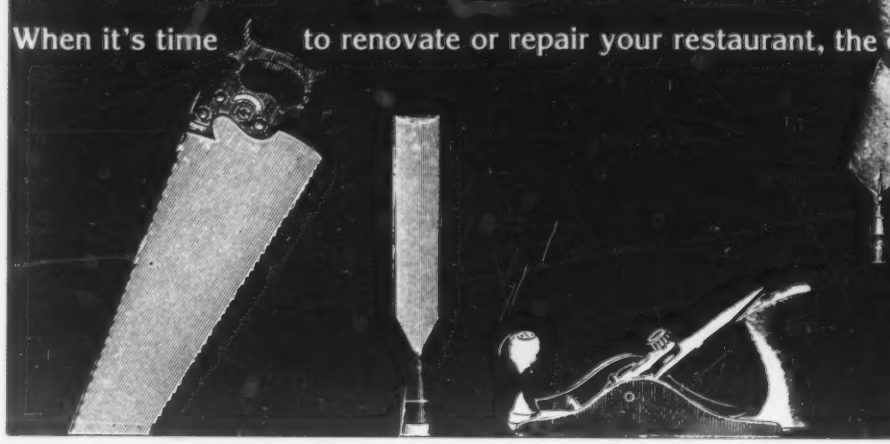
TOP-NOTCH

When it's time to renovate or repair your restaurant, the



by Ju

Whether you are planning a new million-dollar restaurant or a $25,000 repair job, don't assume that luck will lead you to a good contractor for the job. Horror stories abound about fly-by-night contractors who come in, accept a deposit, and then don't come back for two months—if at all. And then there are contractors who take a year to do a job that should have been completed in three months.

Susan Welzien, president and owner of S.W. Wells Design Associates, a Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, firm that specializes in the design of restaurants, has learned by trial and error how to select a good contractor. "Most contractors are basically good, honest people," she says, "but when I was beginning in this business, I was ripped off by some contractors."

Hiring a dishonest contractor, or a contractor who is not qualified to do the job, may cost not only extra money, but extra time as well. To a restaurateur who must close the restaurant or limit seating while construction is going on, time equals money. When you need a contractor, you want someone who will do the job properly, in a timely manner and within your budget.

Finding your own

When it is time to begin the search for a contractor, some people open the yellow pages and call the firm with the most appealing ad. Those like Welzien who are experienced in using contractors are vehement in opposing that method. Instead, they say, begin the search by asking friends, relatives and neighbors for names of contractors they have used and would recommend. If you are employing an architect, designer or foodservice consultant, ask which contractors they have worked with and liked. The chamber of commerce and professional associations (including the local restaurant association) are other sources, although these sources will probably provide you with lists but no specific recommendations. Ask fellow restaurateurs, too, especially those who have recently had work done that is to your liking.

Qualities to look for

Now that you have gathered a list of names, you must do some research before inviting three to five of them to bid on your job. These are the standards you should use:

1. Look for someone established. "Don't go to a little shop that opened two months ago, even if you are offered a great deal, because at least half of those great deals fall through," advises Welzien. Of course, if your job is very small, perhaps you can afford to take a chance at those odds. You may end up with someone so eager to build a reputation that the crew will knock themselves out for you.

2. Look for a contractor who is licensed, bonded and insured. Not all counties or states require licenses, and those that do have different requirements for obtaining them. For example, some jurisdictions make applicants take a test on job skills and knowledge of local building codes.

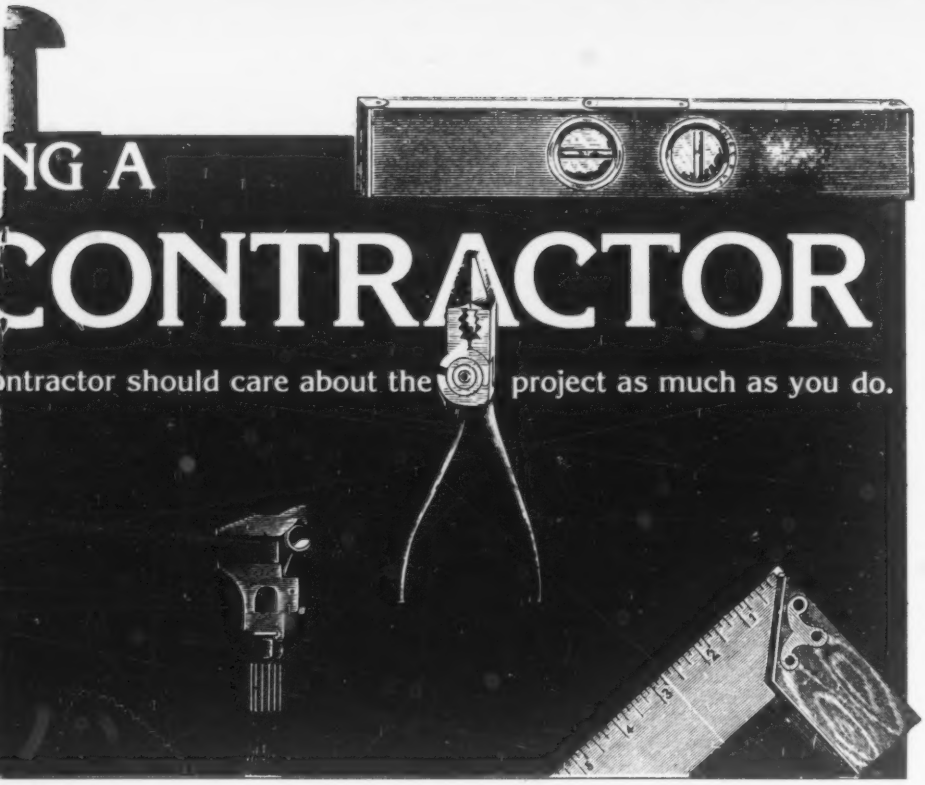
Bonding is a kind of insurance. When a contractor advertises that he is bonded, it usually means that you will be protected if something goes wrong—for instance if one of the subcontractors steals something while working on your establishment.

3. Check references. The most important criterion for finding a contractor is a set of good references.

Ask your prospective contractors to provide a list of references with phone numbers of customers who have had work done similar in size and scope to what you want. Then call these people and ask them the following questions:

- What sort of work did the contractor do for you?
- Did the contractor guarantee the work and fulfill the guarantee?
- Did the contractor follow your ideas and add to them?
- What were the workers like, and how well were they supervised?
- Did the contractor honor the bid price?
- How was the overall quality of the work?
- Was the work completed on schedule?
- Did you get along with the contractor?
- Would you hire the contractor again?

4. Choose a contractor familiar with restaurants and your area. Like doctors and lawyers, contractors specialize. A contractor who builds beautiful houses may not have the know-how to build a restaurant. If the contractor you choose has to struggle with unfamiliar technology and codes, chances are that the entire building process will take longer. When Pete Moffett, president of the



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company that owns four Manhattan Cooler restaurants in the Los Angeles area, built his first restaurant, he used a contractor who specialized in houses. "He had no clue what to do when the fire marshal and health inspector came by," Moffett says.

A knowledge of building codes is of special importance to anyone involved in building or remodeling a restaurant. Regulations govern everything from seating capacity to exit lights to exhaust systems. Because building codes are different in every area (and because they change often), it pays to hire someone familiar with building codes in your city, county or state. A contractor who undertakes work without checking codes could be in for some expensive surprises, as restaurateur Moffett learned the hard way. California codes require floor sinks to be in a certain place under any equipment that discharges (such as a dishwasher). A contractor working for Moffett put them in the wrong place, making it necessary to move them all after the job was supposedly finished.

5. Check the contractor's financial stability. A contractor who suddenly goes out of business could leave you with an unfinished project. It is hard to be sure that this will not happen, but a good reputation is one way of knowing whether a contractor is considered a good risk. You can also ask for bank and credit references.

Joe Spinelli, president and owner of Restaurant Construction Consultants in Rockville, Maryland, has often been called in by restaurant owners to get a project going again after a contractor went out of business during a project. He advises paying in installments to eliminate some of the risk. "That way you don't pay for more than you receive," says Spinelli. "If he goes out of business in the middle of the job and you've only paid him $2,000 on a $10,000 job, it's likely you received $2,000 worth of work from him before he left."

6. Check with your Better Business Bureau. The Better Business Bureau can tell you whether any complaints have been lodged against your candidates and how these conflicts were resolved. The Bureau won't be able to steer you to good contractors, but they can help you avoid bad ones.

7. Invite candidates to walk through the future work site with you. If you have had an architect or designer draw up plans, this is the time to go over them with your prospective contractor. The walk-through is the time to decide whether the contractor and you have a good rapport. You're going to be working closely with the contractor, and it's important that you communicate well.

Asking for bids

When the candidates know precisely what the job entails, it is time for them to submit bids and for you to make your choice.

Do not simply take the lowest bid without investigating thoroughly why the bid is low. Be skeptical. Ask questions about materials, costs and services. For instance, does the contractor have the number of workers it will take to do your job in the agreed amount of time? Welzien recently took the lowest bid for a flooring job and got substandard work. "You can't cut corners," she says. On the other hand, you may find out there are valid reasons for the lower bid. One remodeling contractor, for example, works out of his home and thus avoids the overhead of maintaining an office—a savings he passes on to his customers.

Get it in writing

You have found a good contractor. Now it is time to sign an agreement. Standard contract forms are available from printers, your contractor or the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

If you have any special concerns about the job, discuss them before signing the contract. Include the agreed-upon solutions in the contract. Do not sign until all specifications are written to your satisfaction and take nothing for granted—put it in writing.

Within the contract should be a "waiver of lien." When the waiver is signed by the major contractor and any subcontractors that are used, you will be protected against liens placed against your property by workers whom the general contractor has failed to pay. Waiver-of-lien forms are available at office supply stores.

Be sure to keep copies of all documents.

Homework pays off

Finding a top-notch contractor will take some time and work on your part. But careful research done before you sign a contract will greatly increase your chances of ending up with a job that you are happy with. ❑

Julie Fintel is a writer in Burke, Virginia.

REJUVENATE YOUR BUSINESS AT THE 1991 SHOW

The National Restaurant Association Show is an education, a time for rejuvenation and a celebration all in one. For anyone looking to improve business, make important industry contacts and stay on top of industry trends, the Show in Chicago is the place to be.

The heart of the Show is the exhibit floor, where ideas are shared and contacts are made.

THE 72ND NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION SHOW

The countdown to the 72nd annual National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show has begun. Restaurateurs, hoteliers and foodservice professionals of all types await May 18-22, 1991, and the unfolding of this major industry event at Chicago's McCormick Place.

And with good reason. The Show is the place to check the pulse of the hospitality industry by viewing the latest trends, hearing the latest management strategies and seeing the newest technological innovations at work. It's also a once-a-year chance to learn from the best—some of the foremost thinkers of our time, the most creative practitioners in the industry and the culinary masters who are lighting the way for foodservice in this country and abroad.

And the exhibit floor, the heart of the Show, holds 1,900 exhibitors offering thousands of new products, services and ideas that hold the answers to the problems, challenges and opportunities facing your business.

By day, there are riveting Theatre Series presentations, insightful Management Clinic programs and practical operations-oriented seminars. By night, there are glamorous stars, top-flight entertainment, romantic dancing, gourmet dining and the fabulous nightlife that is a Show tradition.

More than 100,000 attendees from 50 states and 70 foreign countries testify to the uniqueness of the National Restaurant Association Show. Truly in a class of its own, the annual Show is a personal and professional experience too good to miss. Here's what you can expect to see and experience at the 72nd annual Show.

BRING YOUR WALKING SHOES

Now in its 72nd year, the Show continues to amaze attendees with its enormity, diversity and creativity. Nowhere is the unique character of the Show more evident than in its 1,900 exhibitors, covering four huge floors and offering more products, equipment and services than any other show of its kind.

Dubbed the "Show of Shows," this is the place to glimpse trends before they hit the industry and the place to view the latest international products and services before they hit the U.S. market. More international exhibitors and visitors flock to the Show every year. This year's displays include exhibitions from Australia, Canada, Italy, Austria, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, Belgium, Hong Kong and New Zealand.

Always a spectacular display of industry talent and expertise, this year's Show floor promises to be more vital, comprehensive and worthwhile than ever. Be sure to catch these special segments on the lobby level of McCormick Place North:

□ *The Hotel Collection*. This new section is a must-see for hotel and motel operators or anyone interested in the lodging industry. Attendees will see many of the supplies needed to run an efficient and successful hotel or motel operation. Premier hotel suppliers will showcase items including beds, furniture, fixtures, uniforms and other special items unique to lodging operations.

□ *Illinois Avenue*. This special sec-

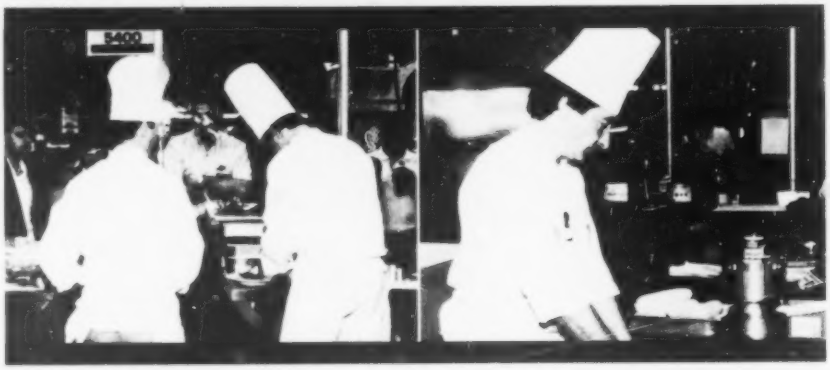
AMERICAN CULINARY CLASSIC

The American Culinary Classic is an experience too good to miss. Held only every four years, this world-class cold and hot-food competition is the largest and most prestigious culinary competition held in the United States. It may well be your only chance to see the brightest lights in international cooking from around the globe in heated competition.

Like the Olympics, this prestigious competition attracts the best. Chefs from 16 nations and four continents match wits and culinary wisdom. Official teams are expected from Austria, Canada, China, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States.

See these masters at work Saturday through Tuesday, right on the exhibit floor of McCormick Place North. Four teams compete each day in the hot-food event, and four other teams compete in the cold (restaurant, buffet and dessert platters) competition. Specially designed glass-enclosed kitchens enable attendees to catch every nuance of the action.

Teams that place first, second and third in the hot and cold-food competitions and those that place first, second and third in the overall competition (a combination of hot and cold) will be awarded sterling silver medals.



The American Culinary Classic is the most prestigious culinary competition held in the United States.

Winners of the American Culinary Classic will be announced at a special awards ceremony in the main hall of the Field Museum of Natural History, located on the waterfront near McCormick Place, on Tuesday evening, May 21, at 6 p.m. This event of pomp and splendor includes a Parade of Nations, with chefs in whites carrying their national flags and with an orchestra playing songs of the winning countries.

The American Culinary Classic is held in conjunction with the American Culinary Federation (ACF) and the ACF-Chicago Chefs of Cuisine. It is recognized and endorsed by these organizations as well as by the World Association of Cooks Societies.

tion features the products and services of companies looking to break into or expand in the Chicagoland area. This is the best place to view the latest products and services taking the Windy City by storm.

□ *Wine and Spirits Way.* Discover the latest trends in the world of wine and learn about some of the best buys in the industry. Wine and Spirits Way features scores of the finest domestic and international wines and exhibitors promoting related aspects of the wine industry.

□ *The Seafood Center.* It's 10,000 square feet of piscatorial knowledge and product, and it's *the* place to discover the latest seafood trends. View the exotic and mundane. See crab, shrimp, lobster and other types of fish from seafood and fish suppliers from both coasts and around the country.

A ROYAL BEGINNING

Communication is what the National Restaurant Association Show is all about. And who better to kick off the Show than broadcast personality Larry King, a master of communication.

A popular television and radio host, Larry King has interviewed many of the most interesting people in the world: writers, politicians, athletes, film directors, historians and other notables, totaling more than 30,000 people. King is the host of *The Larry King Show*, a nightly radio show aired over 355 stations on the Mutual Broadcasting System, and of *Larry King Live*, Cable News Network's lively television program. He also pens a weekly column, "Larry King's People," for *USA Today* and is the author of four books: *Larry King, Tell It To The King, Mr. King You're Having A Heart Attack* and *Larry King Tell Me More*.

Joining special guest speaker Larry King at the podium for the opening-day program is National Restaurant Association President Michael E. Hurst, who caps off his noteworthy year in office during the National Restaurant Association Show. Hurst will highlight industry trends and critical issues, and will review the association's achievements of the past year, in particular covering the success of the "We're glad you're here!" program.

Don't miss this spectacular kickoff to the 72nd National Restaurant Association Show in the Arie Crown Theatre of McCormick Place on Sunday, May 19, at 2 p.m.

Broadcast personality Larry King (left) will bring his wit and energy to the opening-day program at the Arie Crown Theatre on Sunday, May 19. National Restaurant Association President Michael E. Hurst (right) will also address the opening-day crowd.

SHOW SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, MAY 18

9:00 a.m.
Registration and check-in for the pre-Show seminars, presented by the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association; McCormick Place North, lower level

9:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
American Culinary Classic, McCormick Place North, exhibit floor, first of four days; continues May 19, 20 and 21

9:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
Dealer/supplier/press preview of exposition, McCormick Place

10:00 a.m.–6:30 p.m.
Two-day, pre-Show seminar:
SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation, continues May 19

10:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
Full-day, pre-Show seminars:
- □ Banquet Management
- □ Dining Room Management
- □ Food Cost Management
- □ Profitability
- □ SERVSAFE/Serving Alcohol Safely

10:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
Half-day, pre-Show seminars:
- □ Kitchen Management
- □ Legal Issues for Foodservice Operators
- □ Promoting Your Restaurant
- □ Service That Sells
- □ The Labor Issue
- □ Train-the-Trainer

11:30 a.m.
35th Annual Hennessy Awards Luncheon, Hyatt Regency Chicago (ticketed event)

6:30 p.m.
The Grand Banquet and Show/CLF Gala, Hyatt Regency Chicago, in honor of the National Restaurant Association's new chairman of the board and president, with the Four Tops and the Dick Judson Orchestra (ticketed event)

SUNDAY, MAY 19

8:00 a.m.
The start of "The Main Course" 10K race, Grant Park

9:00 a.m.
Registration and check-in for the pre-Show seminars presented by the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association, McCormick Place North, lower level

10:00 a.m.–6:30 p.m.
Two-day, pre-Show seminar:
SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation, last day

10:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
Full-day, pre-Show seminars:
- □ Food Cost Management
- □ Kitchen Management
- □ Profitability
- □ SERVSAFE/AFS Train-the-Trainer
- □ Successful Buffet Management

10:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
Half-day, pre-Show seminars:
- □ Dining Room Management
- □ Promoting Your Restaurant
- □ Service That Sells
- □ Stress Management
- □ Theft Control

10:30 a.m.–6:00 p.m.
Exposition opens, McCormick Place

10:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
American Culinary Classic, McCormick Place North, exhibit floor, second of four days; continues May 20 and 21

10:30 a.m.–6:00 p.m.
21st Annual Culinary Arts Salon, McCormick Place East, Chicago Room, first of three days; continues May 20 and 21

11:30 a.m.
Award ceremonies for the 21st Annual Culinary Arts Salon, McCormick Place East, Jane Addams Room

2:00 p.m.
Opening-Day Ceremony at the Arie Crown Theater, McCormick Place East, with a welcoming address by National Restaurant Association Chairman of the Board and President Michael E. Hurst, who shares the podium with TV and radio host Larry King

9:00 p.m.–1:00 a.m.
Convention Capers I featuring Country vocalist and songwriter Eddy Raven and two of country music's fastest-rising stars, Daniele Alexander and Butch Baker. Hyatt Regency Chicago

MONDAY, MAY 20

9:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
Exposition opens, McCormick Place

9:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
American Culinary Classic, McCormick Place North exhibit floor, third of four days, continues May 21

9:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
21st Annual Culinary Arts Salon, McCormick Place East, Chicago Room, second of three days, continues May 21

10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
Theatre Series, McCormick Place East:
- □ Feeding a Fitter American: The Restaurant's Role, with *New York Times* personal-health columnist and author Jane Brody, Theatre 1
- □ How to Maintain Turnover Below 50%, Do Double the Volume of Competitors, All Without Advertising, Theatre 2

Management Clinic, McCormick Place East:
- □ Positioning for Success
- □ How to Save Water, Save Money and Build Up Sexual Awareness
- □ Healthy Cookin' That'll Put Some Spice in Your Life

Noon–1:30 p.m.
Theatre Series, McCormick Place East:
□ Marketing International Travel, Theatre 1
□ Look Who's Wrecking Your Business Now, Theatre 2
□ A Meeting With Stan Freberg, Theatre 3
Management Clinic, McCormick Place East:
□ Quality Training on $1.99 a Day

2:00 p.m.–3:30 p.m.
Theatre Series, McCormick Place East:
□ It's Not That Easy Being Green, Theatre 3
□ Don't Lose Your Restaurant by Accident, Theatre 2
□ Honest Work, Theatre 1
Management Clinic, McCormick Place East:
□ Perspective Is Everything

9:00 p.m.–1:00 a.m.
Convention Capers II featuring blues legend Buddy Guy. Also stars the Booze Brothers Revue, Chicago Marriott

TUESDAY, MAY 21

9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
□ Salute to Excellence Forums. Industry professionals participate in two separate forums: one with 200 outstanding students and the other with leading educators in the hospitality field. Chicago Hilton & Towers

9:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
Exposition opens, McCormick Place

9:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
American Culinary Classic, McCormick Place North, exhibit floor, last day

9:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
21st Annual Culinary Arts Salon, McCormick Place East, Chicago Room, last day

10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
Theatre Series, McCormick Place East:
□ Achieving Breakthrough Service, Theatre 2
□ It's Not What Happens to You, It's What You Do About It, Theatre 3
□ The Psychology Factor, Theatre 1
Management Clinic, McCormick Place East:
□ What's My Restaurant Got to Do With Saving the Earth?
□ Are You Listening?

Noon
The Illinois Tourism Luncheon honors former Illinois Governor James R. Thompson with the Illinois Tourism Award. With radio personality Wally Phillips as master of ceremonies and U.S. Secretary of Transportation Samuel K. Skinner as presenter of the award. Produced by the Illinois Restaurant Association in co-operation with the Hotel-Motel Association of Illinois, McCormick Place East, Lindheimer Room

Noon–1:30 p.m.
Theatre Series, McCormick Place East:
□ Coming to Your Senses: What's New in Attracting Customers, Theatre 2
□ Improve Service and Quality, Reduce Cost, Build Customer Loyalty, Theatre 1

Management Clinic, McCormick Place East:
□ Participative Employee Relations
□ Creative Recruiting: Beyond the Classifieds

2:00 p.m.–3:30 p.m.
Theatre Series, McCormick Place East
□ How to Make Stress Work for You, Theatre 1
□ Butkus! Actor and former pro football star Dick Butkus, Theatre 2

Management Clinic, McCormick Place East:
□ Hotel Guest Service
□ PRIDE Means Never Having to Say You're Sorry

6:00 p.m.
American Culinary Classic Awards Ceremony, Field Museum of National History

7:00 p.m.
Salute to Excellence Reception and Dinner, Chicago Hilton & Towers (ticketed event)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 22

9:30 a.m.–2:00 p.m.
Exposition opens, McCormick Place

THE "MAIN COURSE" RACE: 3,500 ATHLETES READY AND SET TO GO

It may not be the Olympics, but 3,500 runners at the Grant Park starting point will be poised to take off in the 11th Annual "Main Course" 10K race. The "Main Course" 10K race, held Sunday, May 19, at 8 a.m., is the largest race of its kind to hit the city of Chicago each year, and it's an undisputed off-the-floor favorite with exhibitors, attendees and Chicago residents.

Participants trek a course that runs beside the shores of Lake Michigan, around McCormick Place, through the Prairie Avenue historic district and down Michigan Avenue to the finish line at Arvey Field. The "Main Course" is open to attendees, exhibitors and the public.

America's most hospitable race, the "Main Course" 10K, will be run on Sunday, May 19.

Runners who cross the finish line are eligible for the "You-Don't-Have-to-Win-to-Win" array of prizes—random drawings which include roundtrip airfare for two to anywhere in the U.S., plus dinners and weekend packages at top Chicagoland restaurants and hotels. Additionally, all race participants receive colorful "Main Course" tee-shirts and running gear contributed by the race sponsors.

Sponsors include Pepsi-Cola, Coca-Cola USA, Tyson Foods, Miller Brewing Co., Van Den Bergh Foods, and Minute Maid Foodservice.

The fee to participate in the "Main Course" is $8.95. For race applications or additional information, contact Jim Brimm, Convention Headquarters, 150 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60601. Or call (312) 853-2533.

CONVENTION CAPERS NIGHTLIFE

After busy days on the Show floor, the Sunday and Monday evening hush that settles over the halls of McCormick Place at sundown will be but a pause as the National Restaurant Association Show moves uptown. Convention Capers, four hours of top-flight entertainment, continuous music and dancing, will beckon Show attendees to join in the legendary nightlife that is a tradition at the Show.

It's a popular way to unwind and to meet fellow attendees and exhibitors in a relaxed setting. And best of all, it's free with the Show admission badge.

Here's what the bright lights have in store.

Convention Capers I unfolds at the Hyatt Regency Chicago on Sunday, May 19, from 9 p.m. until 1 a.m. Attendees can hear country vocalist Eddy Raven, who placed his mark on country music in the '80s with hits like *I Got Mexico*. In addition to being a recording star, Raven has won 16 ASCAP awards for his songwriting, including awards for Jeannie C. Riley's *Good Morning Country Rain* and the smash hit by the Oak Ridge Boys, *Thank God For Kids*. Raven's music has a unique sound and feel, sure to please all Capers attendees.

Eddy Raven performs at Sunday, May 19th's Convention Capers.

Sharing the bill with Eddy Raven are Daniele Alexander and Butch Baker, two of country music's fastest-rising stars. Their first duet, *It Wasn't You, It Wasn't Me*, is currently moving up the charts.

Convention Capers II kicks off at the Chicago Marriott on Monday, May 20, from 9 p.m. until 1 a.m. Featured is Chicago blues legend Buddy Guy, an innovative guitarist and intense vocalist who won three awards at last year's National Blues Awards. Also starring the highly danceable Booze Brothers revue.

STELLAR SALUTE TO EXCELLENCE

On Tuesday evening, May 21, the eyes of the industry turn to the Fifth Annual Salute to Excellence Reception and Dinner at the Chicago Hilton and Towers. This invitation-only event, sponsored by the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association, honors industry leaders for their contributions to the advancement of professionalism through education. Special recognition is also given to the leaders of tomorrow—200 top culinary and HRI students.

The climax of festivities is naming the winner of the prestigious Thad A. Eure, Jr., Ambassador of Hospitality Award, which will be presented by foundation chairman Jack A. Laughery.

Master of Ceremonies for the evening is National Restaurant Association President Michael E. Hurst, owner of 15th Street Fisheries in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

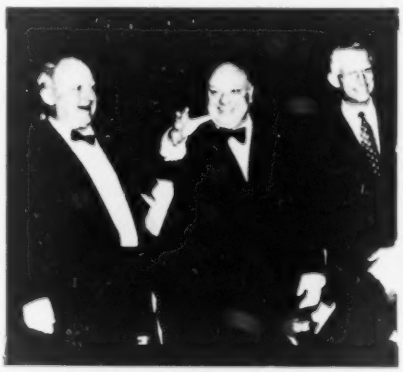
New inductees to the foundation's prestigious College of Diplomates honored at the banquet are Harris O. Machus, chairman emeritus of Harris O. Machus Enterprises, Inc., of Birmingham, Michigan; Anthony G. Mar-

THE FOUR TOPS AT THE GRAND BANQUET

Expect nothing but the tops from beginning to end at this year's Grand Banquet and Show/CLF Gala. Banquet attendees will enjoy gourmet dining, dancing and the music of the celebrated Four Tops, the "Grand Gentlemen of Rock 'n' Roll" and the group whose harmony helped define the Motown Sound.

The Grand Banquet and Show/CLF Gala is an event fit for royalty and an evening on the town not to be missed. Attendees can expect only the best as the National Restaurant Association and the foodservice industry honor the incoming association president at the Hyatt Regency Chicago on Saturday, May 18, at 6:30 p.m.

And who better to set the tone than the Four Tops, that fabulous '60s quartet that continues to delight audiences of many generations. Their list of top 10 hits, many of them gold records, includes legendary favorites like *Baby I Need Your Loving, I Can't Help Myself (Sugarpie, HoneyBunch)* and *It's the Same Old Song*. Rounding out the evening entertainment is the talented and popular Dick Judson Orchestra.



The association's 1990 officers, (left to right) President Michael Hurst, Vice President John Farquharson and Treasurer Richard Marriott, will celebrate the inauguration of the 1991 president at the annual Grand Banquet.

The Four Tops will sing their hits at the Grand Banquet and Show/CLF Gala.

It's an evening of magic from beginning to end. Tickets for the Grand Banquet and Show/CLF Gala are $125 per person. Contact Philip Kralovec at the National Restaurant Association office in Chicago at 150 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60601. Or call (312) 853-2525.

The educational foundation's "Salute to Excellence" Student and Faculty Forums take place Tuesday, May 21.

shall, Dean of the Florida International University School of Hospitality Management in North Miami, Florida; Jane Wallace, vice president and publisher of *Restaurants & Institutions* in Des Plaines, Illinois; and Donald G. Tober, chairman and chief executive officer of Sugar Foods Corporation in New York, New York.

Continuing its commitment to furthering excellence in the industry, the educational foundation again hosts its annual "Salute to Excellence" Student Forum during the day on Tuesday, May 21. This forum, which is co-sponsored by the Coca-Cola Company, maintains an important dialogue between the generations. Industry leaders and top students come together to exchange ideas and to discuss current issues and future challenges.

And for the first time ever, this year the foundation will also sponsor a Faculty Forum, similar in format to the Student Forum but involving faculty members from leading academic institutions. This important new forum will be produced in cooperation with the Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education (CHRIE).

The guest speaker at the Ambassador's Luncheon will be William H. Edwards, retired vice chairman of Hilton Hotels Corporation and the recipient of the 1990 Thad A. Eure, Jr., Ambassador of Hospitality Award.

EDUCATIONAL LINEUP

If the National Restaurant Association Show has a hallmark, it is ideas. And nowhere are ideas more plentiful than in the education programs that continue to draw attendees to the Show each year.

Whether you are a new show-goer or a veteran, the Theatre Series and the Management Clinic are an awesome display of knowledge, expertise and talent.

The Theatre Series allows attendees to gain insight, glean tips and gather techniques from some of the foremost personalities in the industry and the nation—writers, psychologists, management consultants, corporate strategists and others.

The Management Clinic helps operators to solve the problems and meet the challenges and opportunities facing their operations and the industry through dialogue with their peers.

Here are some of the special presentations on tap. All Theatre Series and Management Clinic sessions are held in the East Building of McCormick Place and are free to Show attendees.

Theatre Series

Monday and Tuesday, May 20–21

□ *Feeding a Fitter American: The Restaurant's Role.* Restaurants and good nutrition go hand in hand. Jane E. Brody, personal-health specialist of the *New York Times* and staff member for 25 years, discusses this important relationship in a special Theatre Series presentation.

Brody's widely read column appears in the *New York Times* every Thursday and in more than 100 other newspapers around the country. *Jane Brody's Nutrition Book* enjoyed 19 weeks on the best-seller list, and *Jane Brody's Good Food Book* is a complete guide to wholesome eating. Her latest book, *Jane Brody's Good Food Gourmet*, is a collection of more than 500 recipes and a menu guide for healthful entertaining.

□ *Marketing International Travel.* From the Persian Gulf crisis to the vast political changes sweeping the Eastern hemisphere, the international travel market seems to change daily. Richard C. Nelson of Hyatt Hotels & Resorts, and the 1991 president of the American Hotel and Motel Association, moderates a panel exploring the challenges and tremendous opportunities of the changing international travel market.

□ *Coming to Your Senses: What's New in Attracting Customers.* Learn about the latest international research on all five senses and 20 specific ways to attract and influence customers. Tips include use of localized lights and sounds, taste/touch connections, video vignettes and cross-promotions. Led by Kare Anderson, an Emmy-award-winning former journalist for the *Wall Street Journal*, UPI and *Le Monde*.

□ *Improve Service and Quality, Reduce Costs, Build Customer Loyalty.* Learn how quality improvement drives up productivity, increases employee morale and delights customers. Jim Clemmer outlines a strategic blueprint for high-powered organizational performance.

□ *Achieving Breakthrough Service.* Dr. Leonard A. Schlesinger can help your operation stand out from the pack. A member of the faculty of Harvard Business School since 1978 and former head of Au Bon Pain, Dr. Schlesinger captures what managers need to do to break through and become one of the elite few.

□ *Look Who's Wrecking Your Business Now.* Learn how to find, hire and promote the best people in order to increase productivity and profits. Joe Charbonneau, a top-rated speaker when he last spoke at the Show, explains how productivity is determined by the type of employee you hire.

□ *A Meeting With Stan Freberg.* Stan Freberg has many faces—humorist, satirist, director, producer, recording artist, composer, lyricist and author. Freberg is recognized as the man who gave advertising a sense of humor and, in the process, legitimized comedy as a creative approach to radio and television commercials. Freberg's commercials have copped 21 Clios, 18 International Broadcasting Awards, the grand prize at the Venice Film Festival and the New York Art Directors Club gold medal.

Educational sessions, featuring some of the brightest and most innovative thinkers in business today, are an integral part of the National Restaurant Association Show.

□ *It's Not What Happens To You, It's What You Do About It.* In 1971, a flaming motorcycle accident took W. Mitchell's fingers, his face and nearly his life. In 1975, while piloting his own airplane to an emergency landing, he was paralyzed and confined to a wheelchair while four passengers walked away. W. Mitchell turned adversity into opportunity and rebuilt his life. His inspirational story promises to help operators and other foodservice and lodging professionals.

□ *It's Not That Easy Being Green.* The environment is the catchword of the '90s, but instituting measures to help the environment can be difficult. Presenters including Bill Dover of Red Lobster of Canada, Bud Rusitzky of Serv-Rite Corporation in Rochester, New York, and Cathy Nelson of Rooney's Lobster House in Chicago will explain in detail environmental measures taken over the years and recent steps to deal with recycling, solid waste and the environment.

□ *Don't Lose Your Restaurant by Accident.* Case histories that outline some costly and avoidable accidents rival Ripley's *Believe It Or Not.* Amazing stories include the waiter's tray case ($4 million), the missing chair screw ($2.5 million) and the shot customer ($1.1 million). Learn accident-prevention practices and gain an understanding of liability law. Presented by Dr. Tony Marshall, Dean of the School of Hospitality Management at Florida International University.

□ *How to Maintain Turnover Below 50%, Do Double the Volume of Competitors, All Without Advertising.* Keith Dunn of the successful McGuffey's Restaurants proves that even the seemingly impossible can be accomplished. Dunn outlines an employee motivation system that reduces turnover, a service system that conditions a culture of "the answer is yes," and a method that allows personal name recognition of 30–50% of their 30,000 guests per week.

□ *Honest Work.* Learn how to make your job and the work of your employees more meaningful. Joanne Ciulla, professor at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and author of *Honest Work*, discusses the meanings and values associated with work in America and stresses the importance of business ethics to our society and to the fulfillment of personal success.

□ *How to Make Stress Work for You.* Learn 10 tools for effectively handling stress at work from Peter G. Hanson, M.D., a world-renowned lecturer, family doctor, daily radio program host and author of hundreds of articles and two highly acclaimed books. His international best-seller, *The Joy of Stress*, taught millions that stress is not the killer we assumed. Correctly managed, stress can be the missing key to excellence.

□ *The Psychology Factor.* Back by popular demand, Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute, explores the psychological significance of colors. Learn how this knowledge can help you conceptualize, design and revitalize your restaurant or hotel furnishings, tableware or menu.

□ *Butkus!* Former pro football star and native Chicago South Sider Dick Butkus will add his humor and insight to the Theatre Series as he discusses his success as both athlete and actor.

Management Clinic

Monday through Wednesday, May 20–22

□ *What's My Restaurant Got to Do With Saving the Earth?* Learn ways to adjust to the new realities of an environmentally conscious marketplace, complete with how to get started and how to work with vendors to bring them in line. With Gil Friend, a specialist in ecosystem management and consultant to the best-selling book *50 Simple Things You Can Do to Save the Earth.*

□ *Positioning for Success.* Positioning is the key to shaping customer perceptions. Whether your business is a one-unit operation or a chain, foodservice consultant Linda Tobey provides a way to maximize your marketing efforts in this practical, example-filled session.

□ *Are You Listening?* Correct listening is central to working with people. Dr. Marvin Glock, professor emeritus at Cornell University and one of the early researchers, writers and teachers on listening skills, teaches attendees to communicate more effectively, avoid undesired responses and increase both self-confidence and confidence in others.

□ *Creative Recruiting: Beyond the Classifieds.* Attending this seminar may forever change the way you approach recruitment. Carolyn B. Thompson teaches you to view everyone as a "hot prospect" for employment. Discover exciting ideas on where to find potential employees and how to make them want to work with you and your company.

□ *Hotel Guest Service.* This practical how-to shop talk covers the intricacies of a complete hotel guest service program. The presenters, management representatives from a variety of hotel departments (concierge, QA, front office), explore the challenge of providing quality service on an hour-to-hour basis.

□ *Healthy Cookin' That'll Put Some Spice in Your Life.* Learn to create attractive, flavorful, nutritious menu se-

Jane Brody **Richard Nelson** **Leatrice Eiseman** **Joe Charbonneau**

lections, especially from favorite less-healthful recipes. With Dr. Sandy Kapoor of the Center for Hospitality Management at Cal Poly Pomona.

□ *How to Save Water, Save Money and Build Up Sexual Awareness.* Gain practical, operations-oriented information on proper conservation. Discover how community relations and recycling can improve sales and save real dollars. With Mike Amos of Applebee's in Arizona.

□ *Perspective Is Everything.* Dr. Ray Goodman of the Department of Hotel Administration at the University of New Hampshire contrasts service expectations from a guest's and an employee's point of view. Learn why differences occur and how managers and owners can train employees to deliver service the way guests, not employees, want it.

□ *Participative Employee Relations.* Carole Kohn of the Loews Anatole Hotel in Dallas describes the Anatole's innovative "Township" program. It involves all employees in the development, planning, budgeting and implementation of all employee relations programs. This presentation proves the value of concepts like recognition, communication, employee pride and image, involvement and awareness.

□ *Quality Training on $1.99 a Day.* Hard to believe, but true. This lively clinic discusses how to develop cost-effective, high-impact training and support materials. Many ideas are applicable to both management and hourly employee training. And each item discussed has an average cost per day of $1.99 or less! With Dennis Minchella of Morrison's Inc.

□ *PRIDE Means Never Having to Say You're Sorry.* PRIDE stands for Personal Responsibility In Delivering Excellence. William Wicker of Bruegger's Bagel Bakery outlines a successful contest involving mystery shoppers and employee training.

PRE-SHOW SEMINARS: ANOTHER SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE

It takes a lot more than luck to make it in today's market. Operational expertise, strong professional management skills and keen industry insight can make or break your operation in the 1990s. And the place to gain all this and more is the pre-Show seminar lineup presented by the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association.

Truly too good to pass up, pre-Show seminars cover 16 of the hottest topics, trends and techniques in the industry. Attending any one of these could be the experience that sends you home inspired and revolutionizes your operation. Seminars are offered Saturday, May 18, and Sunday, May 19, preceeding the opening of the Show. All seminars begin at 10 a.m. and are held on the lower level of McCormick Place North, adjacent to the complimentary shuttle bus drop-off site.

Seminar registration fees are separate from the cost of general admission to the Show and include course materials and a certificate of completion from the educational foundation. In addition, the seminars are approved for continuing-education credits by many industry associations.

Registration fees for pre-Show seminars vary. The 2-day SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation Seminar is $200 for one person and $175 per person for multiple attendees. Full-day course registration is $150 for one person and $125 for multiple attendees. Half day seminars run $75 for one attendee and $65 per person for multiple attendees.

The pre-Show seminar lineup for the 72nd National Restaurant Association Show includes:

□ *SERVSAFE/Applied Foodservice Sanitation Certification.* Don't miss this opportunity to attend the nation's leading sanitation training and certification program presented in a two-day workshop. Learn valuable food safety practices in preparation for the SERVSAFE/AFS certification exam. Individuals passing the exam receive a certificate of completion. (Certification requirements vary by jurisdiction.) Deadline for registration is May 1.

□ *Banquet Management.* Learn the key ingredients in creating and maintaining a profitable banquet program. Topics include rating banquet profitability, creating exciting menus and developing personnel.

□ *Dining Room Management.* Management and staff benefit from basic management skills and a program to produce an efficient front-of-the-house staff. Topics covered include customer relations, employee motivation and personnel administration.

□ *Food Cost Management.* Learn to reduce food costs by at least 1 percent using an analytical, problem-solving approach to identify actual and ideal food use. Forms and management tools needed to implement this valuable cost-control program are provided.

□ *Kitchen Management.* Owners, managers and staff discover the key ingredients for running an efficient back of the house. Topics include streamlining purchasing, reducing food cost, improving food preparation and increasing quality.

□ *The Labor Issue.* From creating an active recruitment plan and a high-quality training program to successfully retaining employees, participants learn ways to beat the labor crunch.

□ *Profitability.* A blueprint for improving profits at the unit level. Learn a variety of operating systems, management techniques and cost-control tips that can be implemented in any full-service operation.

□ *Promoting Your Restaurant.* Learn to create an effective promotional plan based on a strong community marketing campaign. Uncover ways to increase sales using direct mail, promotions, publicity and by tapping into local resources.

□ *Successful Buffet Management.* A review of the basics of buffet service with an emphasis on creative menus, decor, preparation and presentation, cost control and staff motivation. Applicable to any size operation.

□ *Theft Control.* Management behavior and procedures are the influencing factors in controlling employee and customer theft. Attendees learn to identify methods of theft and to control theft through operational procedures and increased security.

Special additions to the pre-Show seminar lineup this year:

□ *Legal Issues for Foodservice Operators.* Gain insight into the legal problems of the industry. Topics include handling negligence cases, employee discrimination, breach of contract, government antitrust laws and health violations.

□ *SERVSAFE/Serving Alcohol Safely.* The new SERVSAFE alcohol safety program promotes responsible alcohol service training for managers and servers. This manager-training

seminar teaches attendees the laws concerning service to minors and intoxicated customers. Learn to recognize intoxicated customers and levels of intoxication, to develop written guidelines for servers, and to implement a procedure for providing intoxicated customers with alternatives.

□ *SERVSAFE/Train-the-Trainer.* Individuals who received the Foundation's SERVSAFE/AFS certification can learn to conduct their own food-safety training program. This seminar introduces attendees to all the new *SERVSAFE/Serving Safe Food* training materials. Attendees learn presentation skills to help students retain information and tips on motivating student participation.

□ *Service That Sells.* 50 guaranteed ways to improve service, increase sales and reduce turnover. Transforming "order-takers" into service-oriented salespeople is the key to increasing sales and customer satisfaction. Discover important selling techniques, tips for motivating employees and techniques for improving customer relations.

□ *Stress Management.* Burnout, the number-one cause of turnover among foodservice management, is often reflected in the service received by customers. Learn operational and personal tips for preventing and recognizing on-the-job burnout.

□ *Train-the-Trainer.* Establishing comprehensive training programs means reduced employee and management turnover, improved customer service and increased sales. This seminar teaches owners and managers to identify their organization's training needs and implement a training program that will benefit the entire staff.

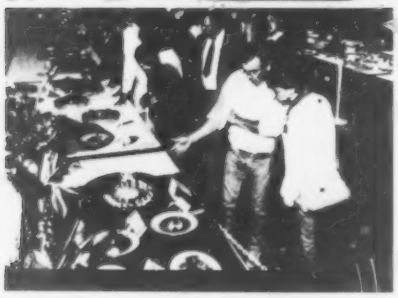
For further information on pre-Show seminars write to the Educational Foundation Customer Service Department, 250 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60606, or call (800) 765-2122.

NOTE: Advance registration is recommended to ensure availability of space and training materials.

CULINARY ARTS SALON

Now 21 years old and still the leading showcase for the latest cold-food culinary presentations, the Culinary Arts Salon is the largest cold-food display of its kind, covering 4,000 square feet of display table space.

Attendees see fanciful marzipan creations, exquisite wedding cakes, spun-sugar sculptures and cold-food displays that can only be considered works of art—all set off to perfection in the beautiful Chicago Room of McCormick Place East, Sunday, May 19, through Tuesday, May 21.



Approximately 200 chefs will fill 4,000 square feet of table space with their culinary creations at the 21st annual Culinary Arts Salon.

Highlights of this year's Salon include an intrasquad competition among the regional teams of the 1992 Culinary Team USA and a special "Works in Marzipan" category in which chefs are judged in four categories: out-of-town professionals, out-of-town student apprentices, best of Chicago professionals and best of Chicago student apprentices.

Eminent chefs and foodservice professionals serve as judges, evaluating entries and naming winners in the following categories: Grand Prize, Pastry Display; Best of Show; Most Original Piece of Show; Judges' Special Award and Best Entry from a Junior Culinarian. Winners will be announced at award ceremonies at McCormick Place East on Sunday, May 19.

The annual National Restaurant Association Culinary Arts Salon is recognized and endorsed by the American Culinary Federation and the ACF-Chicago Chefs of Cuisine.

SECRETARY OF AIR FORCE TO SPEAK AT HENNESSY AWARDS LUNCHEON

Expect pomp and circumstance and an impressive display of leaders from the Air Force and foodservice at the 35th Annual Hennessy Awards Luncheon, the hospitality industry's annual tribute to military foodservice. Dr. Donald B. Rice, the Secretary of the Air Force, will be the luncheon guest speaker at the Hyatt Regency Chicago on Saturday, May 18, at 11:30 p.m.

Before accepting his appointment by President Bush as the Secretary of the Air Force, Dr. Rice was the president and chief executive officer of The RAND Corp., an independent, nonprofit, public-service institution which conducts research and analysis on problems of national security and domestic affairs and sponsors doctoral degree programs in several fields of public policy.

Earlier positions held by Rice include assistant director in the Office of Management & Budget, deputy assistant secretary of defense for resource analysis and director of cost analysis in the office of the secretary of defense.

The annual Hennessy Award is bestowed in honor of John (Lawrence) Hennessy, a civilian long recognized for his advancement of military foodservice.

Each year a panel of distinguished foodservice and military executives single out Air Force bases for excellence in the management, preparation and service of food to military personnel. The competition is divided into two main categories, single unit and multiple unit, with special award categories for the Air Force Reserves and the Air National Guard.

Tickets for the Hennessy Awards Luncheon are $40 and may be purchased through Mary Garnett at the National Restaurant Association, 1200 17th Street, NW, Washington DC 20036. Or call (202) 331-5966.

#116

"But on the other hand . . . "

On a recent cross-country flight, my seatmate and I struck up a conversation. He told me he was the chief economist for one of the nation's prestigious think tanks. We chatted for a while, but then I reclined my seat and my eyes got heavy and *zzzzz*. All of a sudden I found myself talking with the economist again.

Me: Where do you think the economy is headed?

Economist: It may go up, but on the other hand, it could go down. It's a very interesting time. There's been no other time like it.

Me: Do you think the recession we're in will be long and deep, or short and shallow?

Economist: There are a lot of signals that point to a mild recession. Companies are leaner and more productive thanks to downsizing, or as some people term it, "rightsizing." But on the other hand, it could be severe, as the unemployment rate is somewhat high and some financial institutions are shaky, which affects credit availability.

Me: Does the unsettled international scene influence our economy very much?

Economist: That's a very good question. Very good question. Exports are affected negatively when the international community is in disarray, and it can cause upward pressure on oil prices. On the other hand, people at home still need the staples of food, utilities, pharmaceuticals and so forth.

Me: Are you saying that crises and turmoil bring opportunities in the stock market?

Economist: In any economic, political and social climate there are always stocks that are undervalued and those that are overvalued. But on the other hand, the stock market is all psychological, not numerical, as far as I'm concerned.

Me: What do you mean it's all psychological?

Economist: I'm speaking in general terms, of course, but the irony of the market is that when people think we are in a recession and that times are bad, they act that way, and the market goes down. But on the other hand, when people think that there is light at the end of the tunnel and that the down cycle is turning around, the stock market goes up. I got this theory third-hand, so to speak, from a friend of a friend. Actually, he's a barber who does the hair of some noted psychologists.

Me: Is inflation a problem in the immediate future?

Economist: Well, it shouldn't be, but on the other hand, it could be. Interest rates are trending down, which is good for borrowers since that reduces the cost of money, which helps construction and rebuilding of inventories. But on the other hand, a lot of our national debt, which is now $3.3 trillion, is financed by overseas investors such as the Japanese and the Germans. Lower interest rates are not attractive to them, so they may not buy our government securities unless interest rates go up. It's all political as far as I'm concerned.

Me: What do you mean it's all political? I thought you said it was all psychological?

Economist: I'm speaking in general terms, of course, but it's the stock market that's psychological. The vagaries of interest rates are political, not numerical, as far as I'm concerned.

Me: What do you mean by that?

Economist: Well, the Federal Reserve Board is an independent body, technically, and they control the central bank function, supposedly immune from political party pressure. But on the other hand, those governors live in the real world and read and listen to the news reports just as you and I do. In business and economic circles there is always as much interest in the appointment of a new governor to the Federal Reserve Board as there is interest in the general population when a new Supreme Court justice is appointed.

Me: What about the national debt that we have? You said it was $3.3 trillion. With a U.S. population of 250 million, that's a debt load of more than $13,000 for every man, woman and child in the country. That's staggering!

Economist: Well, that is a 13-digit number, and I can see why you and others are concerned. Somebody is going to have to pay that someday. And interest on that debt is the fastest-growing component of the federal budget, and that's bad. But on the other hand, we have a $6 trillion economy, and the addition to the national debt each year (which is each year's federal deficit) is a shrinking percentage of each year's gross national product. That's good.

Me: Using a metaphor, I think you've just told me we're sinking more slowly, but we're still sinking.

Economist: I'm speaking in general terms, of course, but on the other hand, you do seem to have grasped the point.

Me: Well, what about tax rates. What is the outlook there?

Economist: Taxes will do one of two things. They will either go up or they will go down. But on the other hand, they could stay the same. I'm speaking in general terms, of course. It could be good if higher taxes were earmarked for debt reduction rather than increased spending, but on the other hand, it would be bad because increased taxes could draw money out of the economy that otherwise would be spent by consumers and businesses, which in turn would stimulate the economy. It's all philosophical, not numerical, as far as I'm concerned.

Me: What do you mean it's philosophical? You say the stock market is psychological, that interest-rate decisions are political, and now you say taxes are philosophical. You are an economist. Isn't anything economical?

Economist: Oh, it's all economical, so to speak. Economics threads through all those things and many more as well. I'm speaking in general terms, of course.

Me: Who are you going to speak to at your destination?

Economist: I've been asked to address the annual meeting of the Procrastinators' Clubs of America. They're the people who make a virtue out of putting things off.

The crackle of the flight attendant's landing announcement startled me, and I realized I had been dreaming. This conversation never really took place. I did note, however, that my economist seatmate was talking to the passenger across the aisle. He was saying, "I'm speaking in general terms, of course, but on the other hand . . . "

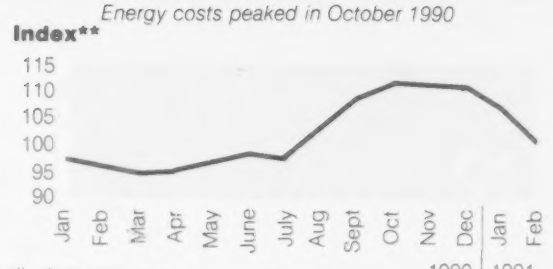
Fisher's Law #116: There is a good reason why economics is known as the "dismal science." What does that make economists?

Restaurateurs are conserving energy

An association survey of tableservice operators reveals that restaurateurs are adopting a variety of measures to conserve energy at their establishments. According to the Consumer Price Index, energy costs advanced a hefty 15.1 percent in 1990, compared with an overall inflation rate of 5.4 percent.

Consumer Price Index (CPI)* for energy
1990 to early 1991

Energy costs peaked in October 1990



* all urban consumers
** 1982 to 1984 = 100
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

A recent National Restaurant Association tableservice-operator survey shows that restaurateurs are taking steps to conserve energy. According to survey results, more than four in 10 tableservice operators reported that they have modified lighting fixtures for energy-conservation purposes. In addition, about 25 percent reported that they have installed heat-recovery equipment on refrigeration and air conditioners. As energy and environmental issues continue to grow in importance, tableservice restaurateurs have acted to conserve energy and also to preserve the environment. Nearly one-third of tableservice respondents report that they have sponsored community conservation activities.

1990 energy costs jump

Driven by the crisis in the Persian Gulf, energy costs in 1990 as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) jumped more than 15 percent. In comparison, energy costs advanced a lower 5.6 percent in 1989.

Analysis of the CPI energy index in 1990 shows that energy costs on a monthly basis actually declined through the first quarter of 1990. However, the start of the Persian Gulf crisis in August 1990 had an immediate and dramatic effect on energy prices—especially gasoline. Between July and October 1990, energy costs advanced almost 13 percent, with gasoline prices up by more than 15 percent during the same period. Since October 1990, energy and gasoline costs have edged downward. Still, gasoline costs in January 1991 were up 19 percent compared with a year earlier.

Restaurant utility costs escalating

The association's *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990* confirms the importance that utility and energy costs play within restaurant operating expenses. For full-menu tableservice operators, median utility expenses in 1989 were $174 per seat, or 3.2 percent of total sales. At limited-menu, no tableservice (fast food) operations, median utility expenses were $194 per seat, or 3.1 percent of total sales.

Considering that the median pretax income as a ratio to total sales for full-menu tableservice establishments was 3.2 percent in 1989, monitoring and controlling utility expenditures can help improve an operator's bottom-line results. Utility expenses were the fifth-highest controllable expense at full-menu tableservice establishments in 1989—higher than advertising and promotion costs, repair and maintenance expenditures, and music and entertainment expenses.

A special analysis of the 1990 industry operations survey data indicates that even before the August 1990 energy price shock,

Percent of tableservice restaurants taking specific conservation steps by dinner check size per person

More than two out of five operators have modified their lighting fixtures to conserve energy

	Dinner check size per person			
Action taken	**Less than $8**	**$8 to $14.99**	**$15 to $24.99**	**$25 or more**
Modified lighting fixtures	46%	44%	40%	46%
Installed heat-recovery equipment on refrigeration and air conditioners	31	22	21	23
Installed low-water warewashers and/or toilet fixtures	35	34	46	32
Served water to patrons only if asked	51	44	35	28
Sponsored community conservation activities	29	28	29	30

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Tableservice Trends 1991*

Changes in Consumer Price Index (CPI)* by selected expenditure category 1989–1990

Gasoline costs jumped more than 14 percent in 1990

Category	Percent change 1989–1990
Gasoline	14.1%
Medical care	9.0
Food at home	6.5
Transportation	5.6
All items	**5.4**
Housing	4.8
Food away from home	4.7
Entertainment	4.7
Apparel	4.6

** all urban consumers*

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Full-menu tableservice controllable expenses 1990

Utility costs are a large component of a restaurant's controllable expenses

Controllable expense	Amount per seat*
Payroll	$1,544
Direct operating expenses	297
Employee benefits	273
Administrative and general	185
Utilities	**174**
Advertising and promotion	104
Repairs and maintenance	95
Music and entertainment	16

** median values*

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990*

operators' utility costs were escalating. On the basis of respondent establishments that reported operating data for two consecutive years, full-menu tableservice restaurants experienced a 6 percent advance in utility costs between 1988 and 1989. This advance was larger than that experienced for payroll expenses.

Supply overview

According to the Energy Information Administration (EIA), crude oil still accounts for one-fourth of our nation's energy production, and U.S. reliance on foreign oil imports has increased to compensate for declining domestic crude-oil production. Crude-oil imports from the Persian Gulf area have risen dramatically. In 1985, U.S. net imports from the Persian Gulf were 304,000 barrels per day. By comparison, in early 1990, U.S. net imports from the Persian Gulf exceeded 2 million barrels a day. Meanwhile, U.S. crude-oil production has declined from 9 million barrels per day in 1985 to around 7 million barrels per day in 1990.

Although crude oil plays an important role in meeting U.S. energy needs, its use varies by industries. For the United States, oil use is concentrated in the transportation sector. As a result of the Persian Gulf crisis, 1990 motor oil prices (especially gasoline) escalated rapidly. Natural gas prices were less affected.

In addition, a fundamental structural change in our nation's energy production has occurred over the past 15 years. According to EIA, coal (primarily used to generate electricity) accounted for almost one-third (32 percent) of U.S. energy production in 1989. Natural gas ranked a close second (30 percent), followed by crude oil (24 percent). By comparison, in 1975, natural gas ranked first (27 percent), followed by crude oil (30 percent) and coal (25 percent).

What this means to restaurant operators is that their total energy and utility costs are dependent upon the mix of the various energy commodities that their restaurant uses. Consequently, many restaurant operators will probably continue and expand their energy conservation efforts and more closely examine their operations' primary sources of energy supply.

—Hudson Riehle

A review of employee turnover rates

The National Restaurant Association has compiled data on employee turnover rates from its annual restaurant industry operations survey. For the first time, turnover data is available for both salaried and hourly employees.

According to the association's 1990 industry operations survey, limited-menu, no tableservice (fast food) operators reported the highest employee turnover rate* in 1989: 140 percent. In comparison, cafeterias experienced the lowest employee turnover rate at 71 percent.

Full-menu tableservice operators reported an annual employee turnover rate of 109 percent, while limited-menu tableservice establishments posted a slightly higher employee turnover rate of 112 percent.

**derived from the number of W-2s distributed and the number of employees working during a typical week*

Higher turnover for hourly workers

For the first time, the association's annual operations survey provides employee-turnover data for both salaried and hourly employees. For all restaurant categories surveyed (full-menu tableservice, limited-menu tableservice, fast food and cafeterias), the annual turnover rate for hourly employees was noticeably higher than for salaried em-

ployees. With the exception of fast food establishments, the annual turnover rate for hourly workers was more than double that for salaried individuals.

In 1989, full-menu tableservice operators reported an annual salaried turnover rate of 50 percent, compared with 119 percent for hourly employees. Cafeterias posted an annual salaried turnover rate of 44 percent, versus 90 percent for hourly employees. Fast food survey participants reported the highest salaried turnover rate in 1989: 100 percent.

Other highlights

□ Turnover was generally lower when the ratio of part-time to full-time employees was lower. For example, at full-menu tableservice establishments, part-time employees accounted for 59 percent of all workers. Among limited-menu, no tableservice survey participants, part-time workers accounted for a larger 71 percent of the workforce. Compared with the 1988 data, the median number of part-time workers remained stable at full-menu tableservice establishments in 1989 while declining at limited-menu, no tableservice operations.

□ Despite slight changes in the operations survey that make prior-year turnover rates not strictly comparable, it appears that annual employee turnover rates declined somewhat between 1988 and 1989. For example, in 1988 full-menu tableservice operators reported an annual employee turnover rate of 120 percent compared with a slightly lower 109 percent for 1989. Fast food establishments posted an annual employee turnover rate of 180 percent in 1988 versus a lower 140 percent for 1989.

□ Among full-menu tableservice survey participants, turnover rates varied substantially by average check size per person. In general, at establishments with larger average checks, the turnover rate for salaried employees was higher when compared with the hourly-employee turnover rate. The opposite was true at establishments with smaller average checks. For instance, operations with an average check of less than $5 reported an annual salaried-employee turnover rate of 67 percent, compared with 136 percent for hourly employees. In comparison, full-menu tableservice establishments with an average check of $15 or more reported a salaried-employee turnover rate of 112 percent, versus 50 percent for hourly employees.

Annual employee turnover rates,* 1989

Turnover among salaried employees was lower than among hourly workers

Type of establishment	All employees	Salaried employees	Hourly employees
□ Full-menu tableservice	109%	50%	119%
Sales volume			
Less than $500,000	94	50	100
$500,000 to $999,999	130	67	134
$1,000,000 to $1,999,999	121	50	133
$2,000,000 or more	99	36	104
Profit versus loss			
Restaurants reporting net profit	118	50	128
Restaurants reporting net loss	131	67	139
□ Limited-menu, no tableservice	140	100	146
Sales volume			
Less than $200,000	120	100	130
$200,000 to $399,999	155	100	163
$400,000 to $599,999	137	50	147
$600,000 or more	171	67	181
Profit versus loss			
Restaurants reporting net profit	163	100	167
Restaurants reporting net loss	160	**	175

** median values*
*** insufficient data*

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990*

Number of full and part-time employees by type of establishment and sales volume,* 1989

Type of establishment	Full-time employees	Part-time employees (20 to 35 hrs.)**	Part-time employees (less than 20 hrs.)**
□ Full-menu tableservice	14	12	8
Sales volume			
Less than $500,000	9	8	6
$500,000 to $999,999	12	10	7
$1,000,000 to $1,999,999	22	20	11
$2,000,000 or more	47	30	18
□ Limited-menu, no tableservice	5	6	6
Sales volume			
Less than $200,000	4	5	5
$200,000 to $399,999	4	5	5
$400,000 to $599,999	6	6	5
$600,000 or more	7	13	10

** median values*
*** per week*

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990*

To order the report

The *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990* (CS955) presents annual employee-turnover statistics for full-menu tableservice operations, fast food, limited-menu tableservice operations and cafeterias. Data is available by menu theme, location, average check size, profit, sales volume, affiliation and type of establishment. The report also contains a wealth of other useful operating and financial data. Copies are available to association members for $39 and to nonmembers for $72. This includes shipping and handling charges (overseas orders require a 20 percent surcharge). All orders must be prepaid.

You may order by sending a check or money order to the National Restaurant Association Publications Department, 1200 17th Street, NW, Washington DC 20036. For credit-card orders, call the association's information service and library between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (Eastern Time) at (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5960.

□ Among fast food operators, establishments with annual sales of $600,000 or more reported the highest turnover rate for hourly employees: 181 percent. Establishments with annual sales of less than $200,000 posted an hourly-employee turnover rate of 130 percent.

□ For full-menu tableservice establishments, operations located in an office building posted the highest employee turnover rate (141 percent), followed by locations in a shopping center or mall (122 percent).

—Hudson Riehle

Update on shopping-center restaurants

Restaurants have become an integral part of many shopping centers, and shopping-center restaurants average higher profits, sales and table turns than sole-occupant restaurants.

Although shopping centers are hardly a novelty, it appears that customers' fascination with them has not faded. According to the National Research Bureau, the number of shopping centers in the United States grew 14.3 percent between 1986 and 1988, from 28,496 to 32,563. Over the same period, retail sales at these centers advanced 15.2 percent, from $556.5 billion in 1986 to $641.1 billion in 1988. (By comparison, total retail sales from all outlets grew by a somewhat lower 13.8 percent between 1986 and 1988.)

But with this growth in the number of centers, there is increased competition to lure shoppers. As a result, many centers are placing an emphasis on foodservice as a marketing tool. Not only does having restaurants in the shopping center mean that shoppers can satisfy their hunger pangs without leaving the premises, but restaurants are also lucrative tenants.

Restaurants convert visits to sales

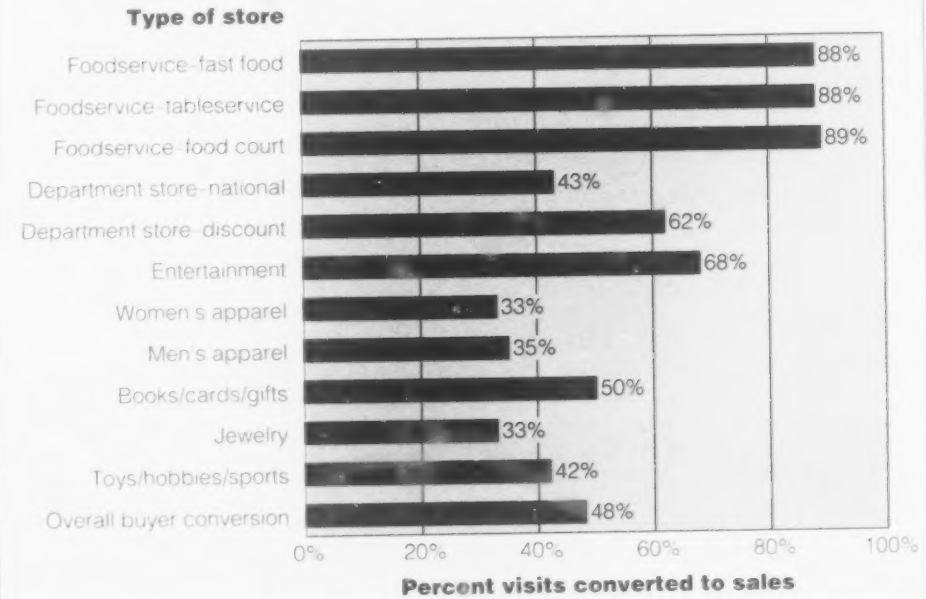
The buyer conversion rate measures the percentage of visits that are converted to sales. According to Stillerman Jones & Company's *National Benchmarks, 1991,** foodservice establishments had the highest buyer conversion rates of any shopping-center tenants. Needless to say, people don't browse at a restaurant or food court the way they do in a department store. Roughly nine out of 10 visits to a foodservice establishment within a shopping center in 1990 ended in a sale.

Among non-foodservice outlets, drug/variety stores (70 percent conversion

* *The 1991 Stillerman Jones & Co. publication* National Benchmarks *represents a summary of consumer characteristics and shopping habits of more than 35,400 shopper-intercept surveys conducted at Stillerman Jones & Co.'s client shopping centers nationwide. Benchmark data are updated on an annual basis and reflect a rolling average.*

Buyer conversion rates at shopping center stores in 1990

Foodservice outlets fair better than other retailers in converting visits to sales



Source: Stillerman Jones & Co., *National Benchmarks, 1991*

Location matters

All locations are not created equal when it comes to shopping-center restaurants. Data from the Urban Land Institute's *Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers, 1990* indicates that both sales and rent per square foot of gross leasable area (GLA) vary greatly for fast food/carryout restaurants in super-regional shopping centers.*

For example, although rents were highest in center court locations ($36.20 per square foot), sales were highest for fast food places located in side-mall locations ($368.67 per square foot). And although both sales ($204.78 per square foot) and rents ($16.72 per square foot) were lowest for fast food restaurants located in anchor courts, rent as a percentage of sales was also the lowest (8.2 percent).

Sales and rent for fast food/carryout restaurants, by shopping-center location

Sales were highest at side-mall locations, and rents were highest at center-court locations

Location	Sales*	Rent*
All locations	$278.83	$26.52
Center court	346.12	36.20
Anchor court	204.78	16.72
Main mall	234.71	21.15
Side mall	368.67	34.59

**median values per square foot of gross leasable area for 1990 at super-regional centers*

Source: Urban Land Institute *Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers, 1990*

** The Urban Land Institute defines a super-regional shopping center as one that offers extensive general merchandise, apparel, furniture and home furnishings and has at least three full-line department stores, each occupying no less than 100,000 square feet.*

rate), entertainment outlets (68 percent conversion) and discount department stores (62 percent conversion) also performed well. For the most part, however, mall stores did not fare as well. Overall buyer conversion among all stores was 48 percent, and of the 26 types of retail outlets studied, 14 had buyer conversion rates below the 48 percent average for all stores.

Higher profits, sales and costs

Data from the National Restaurant Association's *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990* indicates that both full-menu tableservice and limited-menu, no tableservice (fast food)

Spotlight on food courts

Food courts have become an attraction in many shopping centers, allowing consumers to select items from a number of different food outlets. According to the *1990 CARLSONREPORT Food Court Survey*, food-court sales advanced 24 percent in 1990. Of the 16 food categories covered in the CARLSONREPORT survey, 13 reported double digit increases in average unit sales volume, and only one (ice cream) posted a decline in unit sales. Barbecue restaurants led the way with a 68 percent increase in average unit sales, followed by potatoes (up 54 percent) and seafood (up 47 percent).

Among food-court tenants, chicken restaurants had the highest average unit sales in 1990 ($557,545) followed by hamburger ($472,665) and pizza ($389,957) restaurants. Chicken restaurants accounted for the largest share of food-court sales (11.44 cents per dollar). Chicken, hamburger and pizza sales combined to make up almost one-third of all food-court purchases.

The other notable change in food courts in 1990, according to CARLSONREPORT, was the growth in presence of national chains among food-court tenants. In 1989, 33 percent of food courts had more local than national tenants. In 1990, the percentage fell to 4 percent.

A profile of shopping-center patrons

In order to be successful in any location, restaurateurs must be aware of the demographics of their customers. According to Stillerman Jones & Co.'s *National Benchmarks, 1991*, shopping-center patrons had the following demographic characteristics:

- Nearly two out of three shopping-center patrons were women.
- Thirty-one percent of shoppers were between 30 and 44 years old, and an additional 25 percent were between 20 and 29 years old.
- The average shopper had an estimated household income of $38,886. Households with annual income below $15,000 and of $75,000 or more accounted for the smallest shares of all shopping-center patrons (13 percent and 9 percent respectively).
- Nearly six out of 10 shoppers had no children at home.
- Forty-four percent of shoppers visited a shopping center to shop, look around or browse; 30 percent went for a specific purchase.
- Seven out of 10 shopping-center patrons came from home, and 61 percent were going home after leaving the shopping center.
- Half of all shopping-center patrons spent less than one hour at the center; the average patron spent 68 minutes shopping.
- Each shopper spent an estimated $45.65 while in the shopping center. Women spent more on average than men ($48.59 compared with $40.48). Adults between 45 and 54 had the highest estimated expenditure ($57.08), while teenagers between 15 and 19 had the lowest ($27.65).

Operating data for restaurants by location, 1989
Shopping-center restaurants versus sole-occupant restaurants

	Full-menu tableservice		Limited-menu no tableservice	
	In shopping center	Sole occupant	In shopping center	Sole occupant
Average check	$8.54	$9.15	$4.21	$4.14
Average daily seat turnover	1.9	1.5	6.4	2.8
Annual employee turnover rate				
All employees	122%	109%	128%	138%
Salaried employees	67	50	67	100
Hourly employees	134	122	138	148
Number of full-time-equivalent employees	39.5	44.0	14.0	18.5
Sales per full-time-equivalent employee	$21,165	$21,197	$25,692	$24,104
Payroll per full-time-equivalent employee	$ 6,814	$ 7,004	$ 7,525	$ 6,707
Sales per square foot	$ 224	$ 187	$ 278	$ 223
Gross profit per square foot	$ 149	$ 123	$ 194	$ 147

Note: *All values are medians.*

Source: National Restaurant Association, *Restaurant Industry Operations Report—1990*

establishments located in shopping centers have higher profits per square foot than stand-alone (sole occupant) units.

In 1989, full-menu tableservice restaurants located in shopping centers/malls posted a median gross profit of $149 per square foot, compared with $123 per square foot median gross profit for sole-occupant, full-menu tableservice restaurants. The difference was even greater for fast food (limited-menu, no tableservice establishments), as those located in shopping centers reported a median $194 in gross profits per square foot, compared with $147 for sole occupants.

Sales per square foot and total occupation costs per square foot were also higher for restaurants located in shopping centers. Among full-menu tableservice restaurants, those located in shopping centers had median sales of $224 per square foot and median occupation costs of $17.07 per square foot, compared with sales of $187 per square foot and occupation costs of $12.16 per square foot for sole-occupant establishments. Fast food restaurants located in shopping centers had median sales of $278 per square foot and occupation costs of $20.86 per square foot. This compares with sales of $223 per square foot and occupation costs of $12.16 per square foot for sole occupants.

Other differences

Shopping-center restaurants had higher average daily seat turnover than sole-occupant units did (1.9, compared with 1.5 for full-menu tableservice establishments and 6.4, compared with 2.8 for fast food restaurants). Average check size was lower for full-menu tableservice restaurants located in shopping centers than for sole occupants ($8.54 versus $9.15), but the opposite was true for fast food restaurants. Those located in shopping centers had higher average checks than those that were sole occupants ($4.21 versus $4.14).

Employment characteristics differed for shopping-center restaurants and sole occupants, perhaps due to the fact that those located in malls may be open a limited number of hours. For full-menu tableservice establishments, those located in shopping centers had fewer full-time-equivalent employees than did sole-occupant units (39.5 compared with 44.0). Sales and payroll per full-time-equivalent employees were also lower for shopping-center restaurants, and employee turnover was higher.

For limited-menu, no tableservice restaurants, the story was somewhat different. Once again, operations located in shopping centers had fewer full-time-equivalent employees (14.0, compared with 18.5 for sole occupants). However, sales and payroll per full-time-equivalent employee were higher for shopping-center locations than for sole occupants. Employee turnover was lower for shopping-center locations, particularly among salaried employees.

—*Nancy Michalski*

Italian restaurants post continued traffic growth

In 1990, customer traffic at Italian restaurants increased 4 percent, which was double the industry growth rate. Lunch traffic at Italian establishments continued to prosper as America's passion for pasta continued unabated.

According to CREST,* overall Italian-restaurant traffic growth posted healthy gains in 1990, up 4 percent compared with a 2 percent advance for the restaurant industry as a whole. Italian restaurants have shown strong traffic gains compared with the industry since 1986. However, over the past four years, the rate of traffic growth at Italian restaurants has slowed. For example, Italian-restaurant traffic growth was a red-hot 7 percent in 1988.

Much of Italian-restaurant traffic growth has come from the moderate-check upscale restaurant segment, in part due to an expanding number of units. In 1990, moderate-check upscale Italian restaurants represented 42 percent of total Italian-restaurant traffic, up from a 34 percent share in 1986. Midscale Italian restaurants still captured the majority of traffic, registering 52 percent, which was down 7 percentage points compared with 1986. Higher-check upscale restaurants represented a smaller 6 percent share of total Italian-restaurant traffic in 1990, a slight decline from 1986.

Customer counts at moderate-check upscale Italian restaurants jumped in 1990, up 18 percent versus 5 percent for the total moderate-check upscale segment. This compares to a 3 percent decline in traffic at midscale Italian restaurants and a 12 percent decline at higher-check upscale Italian restaurants (see chart).

Counter to the overall industry trend, on-premises traffic growth in Italian restaurants outperformed off-premises growth. In 1990, on-premises traffic at Italian restaurants grew 8 percent compared with a 6 percent decline in off-premises traffic. On-premises traffic at midscale Italian restaurants grew 3 percent compared with a 14 percent decline in off-premises traffic. Still, Italian restaurants had the highest ratio of takeout traffic to total traffic among all midscale concepts (a 32 percent share). In contrast, off-premises traffic at moderate-check upscale Italian places, although only a small portion of traffic, remained strong.

Lunch traffic advanced

Lunch traffic at Italian restaurants continued to prosper during 1990. Traffic for the midday meal was up a strong 16 percent compared with a 1 percent gain for the industry as a whole. However, the shift toward eating in Italian restaurants at noon may have affected dinner customer counts, as traffic for the evening meal advanced a smaller 2 percent.

Despite the advances in lunch traffic, dinner still remained the meal of choice for most Italian-restaurant goers. Dinner accounted for two-thirds of traffic at Italian restaurants in 1990 compared with a lower 41 percent for the overall restaurant industry.

The top ethnic food

According to the National Restaurant Association's *The Market for Ethnic Foods*, one-third (33 percent) of adults rated Italian food (other than pizza) as their favorite ethnic food, making Italian food the top choice. Moreover, nearly half (46 percent) of respondents had eaten Italian food (other than pizza) at restaurants in the past month—more than had eaten any other type of ethnic food in the past month. Three-fourths (76 percent) of customers have tried Italian food in the past.

What are the characteristics of consumers' favorite Italian restaurants? According to study results, large portions, friendly people and service, freshness of ingredients, and quality of food were the top characteristics that adults cited. In contrast, menu variety ranked high in Chinese restaurants and the speed of service ranked high in Mexican restaurants.

According to the study, two-thirds (66 percent) of adults agreed that people would eat more ethnic food in restaurants if the dishes were described better and more accurately on menus. Consequently, it is possible that one way to continue to boost consumer interest in Italian restaurants, as well as in all types of ethnic food, would be to describe dishes more thoroughly.

Who is the typical Italian-cuisine consumer? Survey results indicated that those most likely to have tried Italian food (other than pizza) were patrons 18 to 34 years old, with household incomes of $35,000 or more, and residents of metro areas with populations of 1 million or more.

High check size, low promotion use

CREST data show that the average check size per eater was higher at Italian restaurants than at most other tableservice restaurants. In 1990, midscale Italian res-

Popularity of ethnic food types at restaurants

More adults report having eaten Italian food at restaurants during the previous month than any other type of ethnic food*

Ethnic food	Percent of adults who have eaten the ethnic food in past month	Percent of adults who have tried the ethnic food in past
Italian	46%	76%
Chinese	45	78
Mexican	41	74
Greek	10	35
French	9	45
Spanish	9	39
Japanese	7	36
German	6	38

**excludes pizza*
Source: National Restaurant Association, *The Market for Ethnic Foods*, 1989

**CREST stands for* Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends, *a diary survey conducted by the NPD marketing and research companies.*

Percent change in traffic at Italian restaurants, 1987 through 1990

Italian restaurants have shown strong traffic gains compared with the industry as a whole

	1987	1988	1989	1990
Total Italian	14%	7%	4%	4%
Total industry	4	1	1	2
Midscale Italian	15	5	−1	−3
Total midscale	−1	−2	1	−1
Moderate-check upscale Italian	11	9	15	18
Total moderate-check upscale	2	−3	8	5
Higher-check upscale Italian	17	18	1	−12
Total higher-check upscale	−3	4	−5	−6

Note: *Percent change is over prior year.*
Source: NPD/CREST Annual Household Reports

Favorite menu items at Italian restaurants, 1990

Pasta dishes were popular across the board

	Percent of eater occasions on which food item was included		
Food item	**Midscale Italian**	**Moderate-check upscale Italian**	**Higher-check upscale Italian**
Pizza	39%	15%	3%
Spaghetti	16	21	13
Other pasta	26	44	50
Side-dish salad	27	51	59
Alcoholic beverages	11	24	64

Source: NPD/CREST Annual Household Report, 1990

taurants posted an average check size per eater (excluding tips) that was 25 percent higher than that for total midscale restaurants ($5.93 versus $4.73). Similarly, the average check was higher at moderate-check upscale Italian restaurants ($8.15) than at all moderate-check upscale restaurants ($7.87), and the average check was noticeably higher at higher-check upscale Italian places ($23.57) than for the higher-check upscale segment as a whole ($15.62).

One factor contributing to the higher check size at Italian restaurants was the relatively low use of promotions. In 1990, promotions were used on 13 percent of all eater occasions** in midscale Italian restaurants, on 11 percent of eater occasions in moderate-check upscale Italian places, and on 7 percent of occasions in higher-check upscale Italian places. By comparison, promotions were used on 16 percent of eater occasions in the midscale restaurant segment, 15 percent in moderate-check upscale restaurants, and 13 percent at higher-check upscale restaurants. Also, alcoholic beverages were more likely to be ordered at Italian places, thereby driving check sizes upward.

*** An eater occasion is one meal eaten by one person.*

Favorite Italian foods

Pasta was the most frequently ordered entree at Italian restaurants. In 1990, pasta was included in two out of every five eater occasions at midscale Italian restaurants, and in three out of five eater occasions at both moderate-check and higher-check upscale Italian restaurants. Side-dish salads were included in more than one-fourth of eater occasions at midscale Italian restaurants and in more than half of occasions at upscale Italian places.

Although the incidence of ordering spaghetti at Italian restaurants remained relatively stable between 1989 and 1990, the incidence of ordering other types of pasta surged. In 1990, 26 percent of eater occasions at Italian midscale restaurants included pasta other than spaghetti, up from 21 percent in 1989. Similarly, 44 percent of eater occasions at moderate-check upscale Italian places included pasta other than spaghetti, up from 40 percent in 1989.

Pizza was popular at midscale Italian places (included in two out of five eater occasions), but was ordered less often at upscale Italian places. Alcoholic beverages were more popular at Italian restaurants than at other types of establishments. For example, nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of eater occasions at higher-check upscale Italian restaurants included an alcoholic beverage, compared with about one-third (36 percent) for the higher-check upscale segment as a whole.

Pasta passion

U.S. consumption of pasta has been steadily increasing since 1982. According to the National Pasta Association, in 1990 the estimated consumption of pasta in the United States was 18.4 pounds per person, or 4.6 billion pounds. By comparison, in 1982, the per capita consumption was 12.9 pounds, a total of 3.0 billion pounds. Moreover, the National Pasta Association projects that per capita consumption will reach 30.6 pounds by 2000.

A 1988 survey conducted by the Roper Organization for the National Pasta Association revealed that one-third (30 percent) of Americans said they eat a lot of pasta. More respondents in the Northeast (38 percent) said they eat a lot of pasta than did respondents in the South (24 percent).

Pasta is also popular with the at-home market. According to *Progressive Grocer*, national pasta sales at grocery stores reached $1.6 billion in 1989, an 8 percent increase over 1988. Macaroni dinners and pasta dinners (other than spaghetti) showed particularly strong gains.

—Elizabeth Gordon

Foodservice Market Measure—January 1991

After trending downward in the fall of 1990, the proportion of adults who were foodservice patrons on a typical day held relatively steady from November 1990 through January 1991. Slightly less than half of all adults, 48 percent, were industry patrons on a typical January 1991 day, versus 50 percent a year earlier. Compared with 12 months prior, on-premises patronage, particularly for lunch, is clearly showing the effect of the economic downturn.

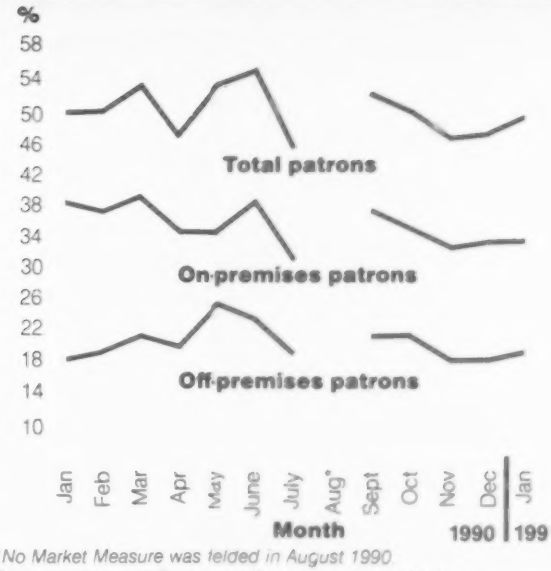
As the unemployment rate climbed to 6.2 percent in January 1991, from 5.2 percent in January 1990, the proportion of adults who were lunch patrons declined from 31 percent to 24 percent. Nevertheless, the 24 percent level has remained unchanged for three months despite rising unemployment. Although the proportion of adults purchasing carry-out lunches was 7 percent this January versus 10 percent a year earlier, most of the decrease occurred in on-premises business. The proportion of adults who reported that they were on-premises lunch patrons on a typical day was 6 percentage points lower than last year, down from 23 percent in January 1990 to 17 percent in January 1991.

In addition to the decrease at lunch, patronage at breakfast was off slightly, and the proportion of adults reporting that they ate an on-premises snack was off from 5 percent in 1990 to just 2 percent in January 1991. In contrast, little change was evident in comparing January 1990 to January 1991 in the proportion of adults who were dinner patrons on a typical day.

The accompanying table shows that significant declines in on-premises patronage in January 1991 versus a year earlier were evident for men, middle-income consumers and those residing in the Midwest.

—Susan Mills

Percent of adults who were foodservice patrons



*No Market Measure was fielded in August 1990.
Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Percent of adults who were on-premises patrons on a typical day by demographics

	January 1990	January 1991	Percentage point change
Sex			
Male	43%	36%	−7*
Female	33	30	−3
Age			
18 to 24 years old	45	46	+1
25 to 34 years old	43	31	−12*
35 to 44 years old	38	31	−7
45 to 54 years old	28	35	+8
55 to 64 years old	47	29	−18*
65 years old and older	29	30	+1
Annual household income			
$40,000 or more	48	42	−6
$20,000 to $39,999	36	25	−9*
Less than $20,000	31	30	−1
Region			
East	32	31	−1
Midwest	42	28	−14*
South	40	36	−4
West	35	38	+3

*significant difference
Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Percent of adults who were on-premises patrons on a typical day

Meal period	January 1990	January 1991	Percentage point change
On-premises	38%	33%	−5*
Breakfast	6	4	−2
Lunch	23	17	−6*
Dinner	15	14	−1
Snacks	5	2	−3

*significant difference
Source: National Restaurant Association Gallup Survey

Foodservice Market Measure

The Foodservice Market Measure is based on 1,000 telephone interviews, conducted by the Gallup Organization each month, with a nationally representative sample of adults age 18 and older. Each person is asked the same questions:

1. Which of the following did you do yesterday?

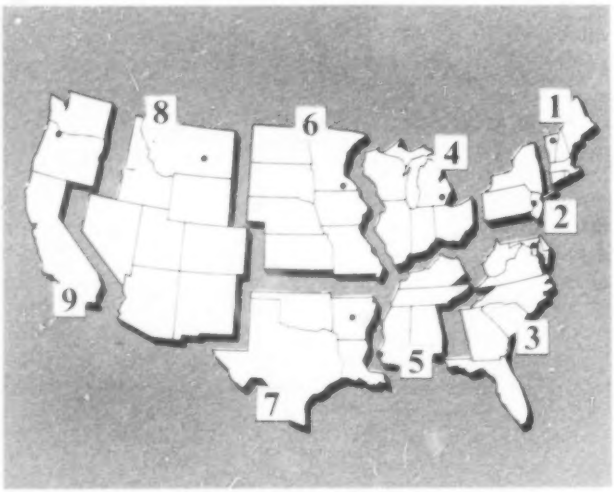
☐ Ate on the premises of a restaurant, fast food place, cafeteria or any other place where you purchased a meal or snack.

☐ Purchased takeout food "to go" or had it delivered.

2. Was the food you ate on premises yesterday for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

3. Was the takeout food you purchased or had delivered for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a snack?

The monthly tracking of purchases is supplemented by quarterly inquiries on topics of industry interest.



1 NEW ENGLAND

Location: Lydonville, VT
Association members: Mary and Jim O'Reilly
Operation: The Wildflower Inn
Profile: Inn and upscale restaurant
In business: Inn 5½ years, restaurant 2 years
Seats: 32
Meals served: Breakfast to guests, dinner to public

The slow economy combined with a poor snowfall has brought business down 10 to 20 percent at The Wildflower Inn, says co-owner **Mary O'Reilly.** "The snow hasn't been that good this year, and we usually do a fairly good tourist trade when skiers come to Burke Mountain," she says.

O'Reilly and her husband **Jim** encourage families to stay at the 20-room inn. "I know that's unusual for an inn to encourage families with children to come, but we like to have families here. We have children of our own, and we saw that there was a real market for people who want to enjoy the country but don't want to leave their children behind," O'Reilly says.

The inn is situated on a country road and boasts extensive flower gardens and elaborate landscaping so that guests may commune with nature.

2 MID-ATLANTIC

Location: Mercerville, NJ
Association member: Gary Fuerst
Operation: GreenStreets Restaurant
Profile: Upscale restaurant
In business: 6 years
Seats: 50
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"We're doing pretty good, but we're down from past years like everybody else," says **Gary Fuerst,** general manager of GreenStreets Restaurant. Fuerst is keeping an eye on costs, and he tries to bring customers in with early-bird specials.

The restaurant is off a main road, in the woods, and has a rustic look with a fireplace and country-style decor. The cozy atmosphere makes the establishment especially popular with couples, says Fuerst. During the day, professionals fill the tables for lunch. GreenStreets serves steaks, chops and fresh fish and features eight specials each night.

Fuerst says that a restaurant's two greatest priorities should be "food presentation and service. Most of our staff has been with us for a while, and they provide excellent service," he says.

3 SOUTH ATLANTIC

Location: Columbia, MD
Association member: Marsha Berman
Operation: Cover to Cover Bookstore Cafe
Profile: Mid to upscale restaurant with adjacent bookstore
In business: 2½ years
Seats: 50
Meals served: Lunch, dinner, Saturday breakfast, Sunday brunch

Reading a book while eating dinner is something people often resort to when dining alone, but at Cover to Cover it's one of the reasons people choose to eat there. Cover to Cover is a bookstore and cafe combined. "People will come in and look around the bookstore and then be lured into the cafe by the aroma. The same is true of diners who go into the bookstore after eating because they saw other people reading interesting books," says manager **Val Slater.**

The quaint establishment offers live music on Friday and Saturday nights. Book browsers and diners are entertained by jazz musicians, folk singers and classical guitar players. Around holidays, the operation receives many reservations for its high-tea service. The tea features scones, finger sandwiches and tea for $6.95.

"We have a lot of two-tops, and the atmosphere is cozy and relaxed, so a lot of couples come in. During the day, we get business-people. At night we get people in their 30s who want to enjoy the music and our large selection of good desserts," says Slater.

4 EAST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Walled Lake, MI
Association member: Norman LePage
Operation: Nifty Norman's
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 13 years
Seats: 110
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"Right now our business is up about 5 percent, mostly because we're using more promotions," says **Nell Cooley,** general manager. Cooley says they sent out a personal mailer to individual homes with a letter from owner **Norman LePage.** "It was a thank-you letter for their previous business, and we also gave them a gift certificate to use when they come back in," says Cooley. "Because of the economy, people are looking for good deals when they eat out."

At the beginning of this year, the restaurant's concept was changed to that of a family-style restaurant. "During the end of last year, we could tell that things were getting tighter and that we needed to change our concept to attract more business," says Cooley. Less expensive entrees were added to the menu, which features everything from Mexican items to fresh fish, steaks and sandwiches.

Cooley says Nifty Norman's will "stick with the new format for at least a year to gauge how it affects business. But so far it seems to be a change for the better."

5 EAST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Natchez, MS
Association member: Loveta Byrne
Operation: The Burn
Profile: Bed and breakfast
In business: 9 years
Seats: 80
Meals served: Breakfast for guests, dinner

Tourists wishing to return to the era of the Old South fill The Burn to capacity from March through April. "Our biggest tourist season begins in March with the Old Homes Tour. There are pageants four nights a week, the flowers are blooming and it gives people a chance to relive the glory days of the South," says owner **Loveta Byrne.**

Guests staying in one of the inn's 12 rooms sleep on plump canopy beds in rooms filled with antiques. "The furniture might be chipped a little, but it's the real stuff," says Byrne. A big Southern breakfast greets overnight guests, with homemade biscuits, eggs, plain or cheese grits, bacon, sausage or ham, and homemade preserves.

The Burn also serves dinner to tour groups, local community organizations and companies. Dinner guests get a tour of the house while sipping mint juleps and then sit down to a meal of Byrne's culinary delights. "We try to give them a taste of true Southern hospitality. We want them to feel like they have been invited into someone's home," says Byrne.

6 WEST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Austin, MN
Association member: Eugene Roden
Operation: Wagon Wheel
Profile: Midscale restaurant
In business: 18 years
Seats: 86
Meal served: Dinner

"Business is generally good, but it was best around 1982–1983 and poorest around 1985," says owner **Eugene Roden.** Wagon Wheel did good business after the Hormel Co. opened a plant in the area in the late '70s that drew in new workers. But a union strike in 1985 caused conflict and unrest in the city, and that rippled into area restaurant business.

The Wagon Wheel is primarily a steak house, but among its dinner entrees are seafood, pork, lamb, veal and chicken items.

Weather conditions play a big part in the operation's business. "We're rural; we're located three miles outside the city. People won't come out in bad weather," Roden says.

Every January, the Wagon Wheel closes, and the owners take a vacation. But even while on vacation, they are thinking of their customers—and of promoting the restaurant. From their vacation site (the Caribbean, Mexico or the southern United States), the owners send personal postcards to their regular customers; 124 were sent this past January.

7 WEST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Little Rock, AR
Association member: Don Phelan
Operation: Browning's Mexican Express
Profile: Fast food takeout operation
In business: 4 years
Seats: None
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Catering to the public's growing demand for convenience, Browning's Mexican Express serves its customers fast by offering only drive-thru or walk-up service. "It's a small square—about 17 by 21 feet," says manager **Susan Goolsby.** "Only four people can work at one time, and everyone has to be able to get along really well."

Business has been brisk at the operation, attracting the young couples and singles who live in the apartment complexes surrounding the unit. "We get people who are on the go constantly. They like to stop here on the way home from work because they know we have good food at reasonable prices that they can get quick," says Goolsby.

8 MOUNTAIN

Location: Roundup, MT
Association member: Mark Petrie
Operation: Busy Bee Cafe
Profile: Family-style restaurant
In business: 22 years
Seats: 250
Meals served: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

When the temperature dipped below zero and stayed there during recent months, business froze as well at the Busy Bee, according to owner **Mark Petrie.** But now that the weather is warming up, people are coming in to redeem coupons that Petrie ran with ads in the local paper. One of the coupons entitles customers to pie and coffee for $1, just the thing to chase away the cold.

In the wintertime, Petrie says that 80 percent of his customers are local, but in the summer the Busy Bee draws many tourists.

The specialty of the house is the salad bar stocked with homemade items. "Our cooks are ranch cooks—they used to cook for ranch hands. We cook roasts every day and make our own gravy, vegetable soup and spaghetti sauce. I think people appreciate the effort to make everything from scratch. It just tastes better," he says.

9 PACIFIC

Location: Portland, OR
Association member: Tiger Warren
Operation: Macheezmo Mouse
Profile: Upscale quickservice chain
In business: 10 years
Seats: 85
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"We're doing pretty good, not bad at all for a brutally tough industry," says owner **Tiger Warren,** with tongue in cheek. Warren founded the Macheezmo Mouse chain with a mission of providing "a new breed of fast food for people who like to feel fit." The operation serves Mexican food that is either grilled, baked or steamed so that it is lower in calories and fat, but still filling.

The concept appealed to Warren because "it's the way I like to eat—hearty food that is healthy for your heart as well. Also, there was nobody out there doing it, so it was niche marketing," says Warren.

The units are spread throughout Seattle, San Francisco and Portland. The name of the restaurant was the result of brainstorming efforts of Warren and some friends. "We couldn't think of a name, so we started to get silly and throw out all these really bad puns. We thought Macheezmo Mouse was funny, so it stuck," he says.

—Jennifer Batty

Cardboard cops cut out crime

Nothing fends off crime better than round-the-clock security, but few businesses can afford such protection. Some innovative Kroger supermarket operators in Dallas, however, have found a way to raise security without raising their budgets. The guards they choose are quiet, attentive and cheap. They're also made of cardboard.

Although at first thought, cardboard cops may seem to lack the punch necessary to have much effect on crime, the life-size stand-up photographs of local officers have been quite successful as deterrents. The cutouts—based on an idea developed by British "bobbies"—are not expected to actually prevent crime but to subtly (or not so subtly) remind customers of the ramifications of shoplifting. When the project began, each "officer" had a sign attached that read "Shoplifting is a crime." Messages can be easily altered to fit a variety of purposes and perpetrations.

Although there is not yet concrete proof that these cardboard cops lower crime rates, both Kroger and a hardware store have reported positive results. Apparently, the sight of a badge—even a cardboard one—is enough to make a would-be offender think twice.

—National Association of Convenience Stores

Coffee for one

For restaurateurs who often end up pouring unsold coffee down the drain, Procter & Gamble may have a solution to save both grounds and dollars.

The company recently introduced Folgers Singles, which are individually wrapped bags of coffee, suitable for plopping into a mug of boiling water. Similar to tea bags, each "single" contains a combination of freeze-concentrated and ground coffee that produce a cupful of brew in a matter of minutes. The bags can be microwaved to make coffee in a matter of seconds.

Although tea bags have been in common use for decades and coffee bags are available in Europe, Folgers is the first major coffee brand to be mass marketed in individual servings in the United States.

—Advertising Age

Zapping the zing from ads

A dark shadow looms before one of the most popular—and most lucrative—advertising arenas: television. The culprit? The VCR.

As technology continues to simplify the videocassette recorder, advertisers fear that more and more commercials will be lost—zapped from the screen with a touch of the fast-forward button. Today, seven out of 10 households own VCRs, but they are used mainly for viewing rental movies. Only 3 percent of viewing time is spent watching taped programs (according to A.C. Nielsen), probably because of the complexity of programming a VCR.

Simplification, however, is inevitable, as new products and developments make VCRs more user-friendly. Nielsen studies estimate that viewers currently ignore 40 percent of the commercials they tape, either by blindly speeding through commercial breaks or by not watching taped programs—and that number could rise. Viewer antipathy toward commercials continues to grow: Two-thirds of viewers polled last year by Video Storyboard Tests reported that they preferred television with no commercials at all (up from 53 percent in 1985).

Advertisers are already developing counterattacks, as agencies design spots to suit a four-second fast-forward glimpse rather than a 30-second long look. Changes include more obvious logo placement and "supers"—words flashed on the screen that are visible throughout the quick zip.

—Wall Street Journal

Snooze and fly

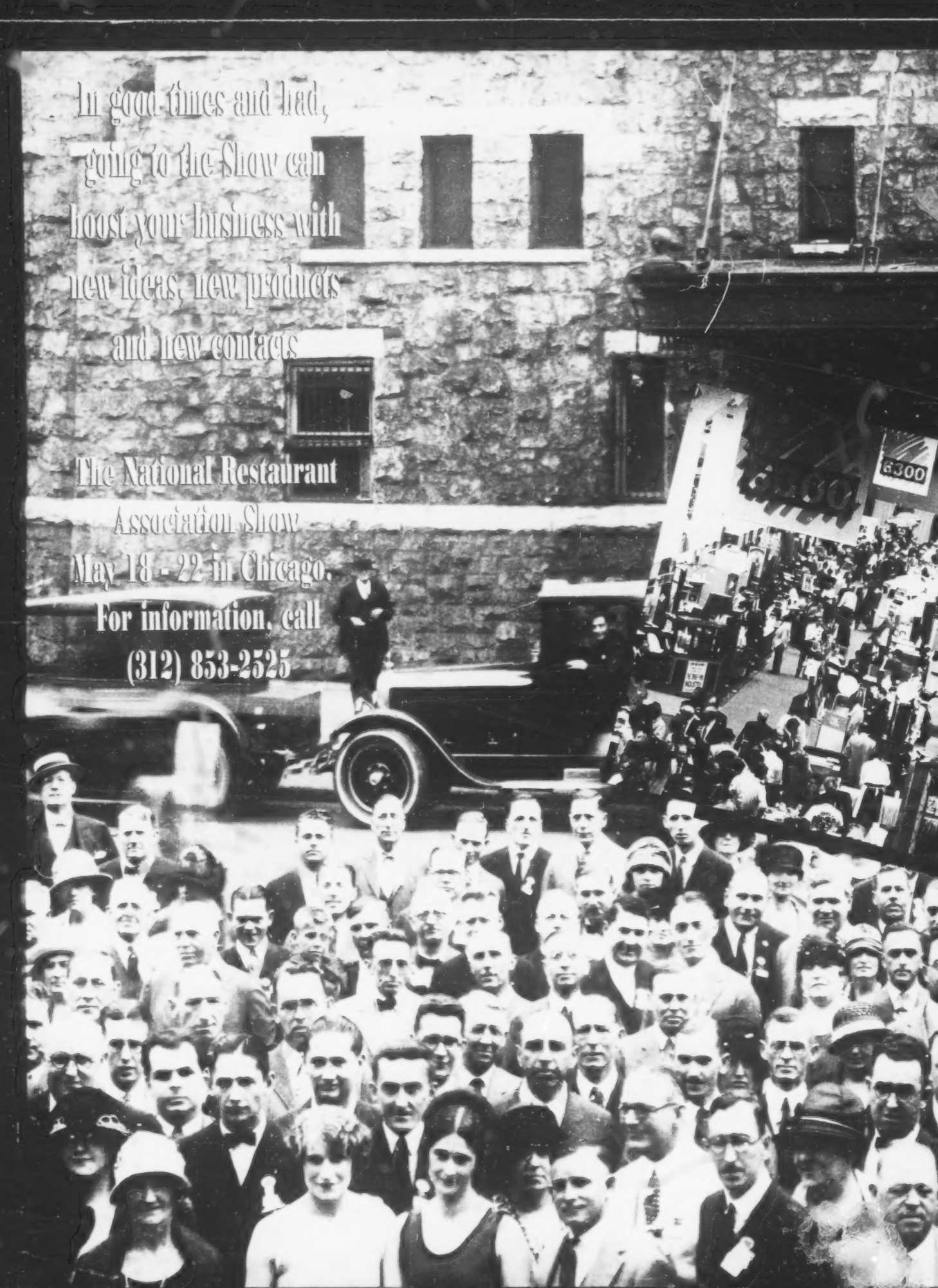
Los Angeles is known as a driving city, and for the many locals who frequent its international airport, it's also a parking city—and an expensive one. Marriott Hotels, however, has developed a way to lure those hometown parking dollars away from airport lots and into its own coffers while providing harried travelers with a comfortable alternative to the pre-flight rush.

For about the same price as a week's worth of long-term parking, Angelenos can stay at the L.A. Airport Marriott Hotel the night before a departure and receive deluxe accommodations, a meal for two, complimentary valet parking, free shuttle service to the airport and underground parking for the duration of the trip. The

package has proved popular with early-morning travelers who no longer need worry about traffic jams, construction delays or a long commute in the pre-dawn hours.

The L.A. Airport Marriott also offers guests another special service: ticket-printing machines that allow passengers to alter their flight plans without ever facing an airline ticket counter.

—Cornell Quarterly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